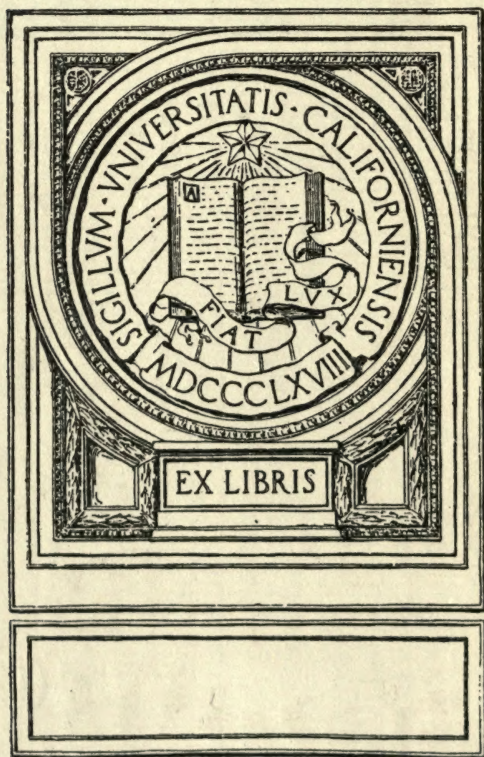




*Bernard Moses.*

IN MEMORIAM  
BERNARD MOSES



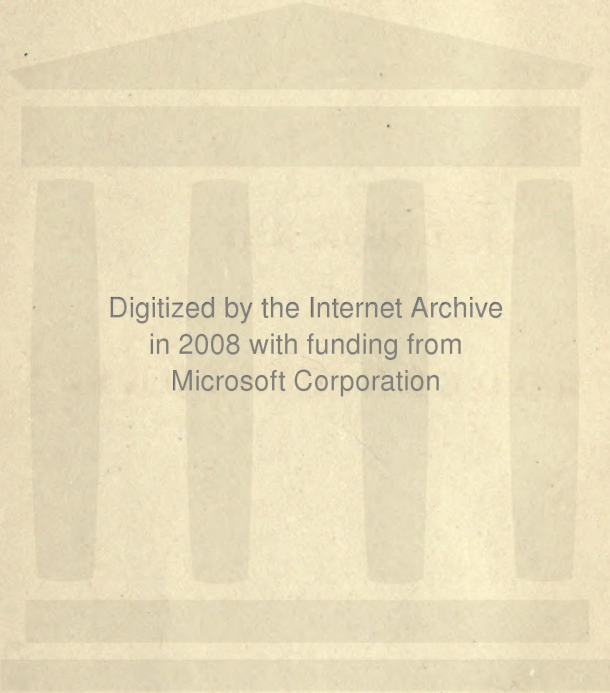












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LECTURES

MODERN HISTORY

THE ORIGIN OF THE NORTHERN NATIONS

THE STORY OF THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION

LECTURES

ON

MODERN HISTORY.

WITH ADDITIONS

A SECOND EDITION, BY JARED SPARKS

BY JARED SPARKS.

BOSTON.

CHAS. NICHOLS AND SONS

1850.

RENTURES

# MODERN HISTORY

1800

THE HISTORY OF THE NORTHERN NATIONS

A HISTORY OF THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION

THE AMERICAN

BY WILLIAM H. HARRIS

# MODERN HISTORY

THE HISTORY OF THE NORTHERN NATIONS

THE AMERICAN

1800

A HISTORY OF THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION

THE AMERICAN

BOSTON

CHARLES W. HARRIS

1800



LECTURES  
ON  
MODERN HISTORY,

FROM

THE IRRUPTION OF THE NORTHERN NATIONS

TO

THE CLOSE OF THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION.

By WILLIAM SMYTH,

PROFESSOR OF MODERN HISTORY IN THE UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE.

---

THIRD AMERICAN EDITION, REVISED AND CORRECTED.

WITH ADDITIONS.

INCLUDING

A PREFACE, AND A LIST OF BOOKS ON AMERICAN HISTORY

By JARED SPARKS.

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BOSTON:  
CHASE, NICHOLS AND HILL.  
1860.

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1860

**BERNARD MOSES**

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# P R E F A C E

TO

THE FIRST AMERICAN EDITION.

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NOTHING so much embarrasses a student, who is beginning the study of history, as the difficulty he finds in selecting the best authors, ascertaining their intrinsic and relative merits, and in marking out for himself the most profitable course of reading. He is bewildered amidst a multitude of books, and perpetually at a loss, as he proceeds, to determine the comparative importance of periods, events, and characters. If he seeks a guide, he is either met by a dry catalogue of authors, arranged with little discrimination, or referred to abridgments and abstracts, as destitute of the soul and substance of history, properly so called, as a skeleton is of the spirit and proportions of a living man. His time is thus lost and his patience exhausted, while he makes scarcely any progress in those acquisitions which it is the design of history to communicate, and by which the mind should be expanded and strengthened at the same time that it is enriched with facts.

Professor Smyth has undertaken to remove these obstacles; and, if we may judge by the manner in which his task has been executed in these volumes, it is safe to say that it could not have fallen into more skilful or experienced hands. His object is to teach students, and readers generally, how to read history for themselves; to show them the path, and furnish them the best lights for pursuing it; to enable them to form a just estimate of the principal authors, and

to bring forward in bold relief those prominent parts of history to which their attention should chiefly be directed. His plan is unfolded with clearness and precision in his Introductory Lecture. It is broad and comprehensive, and such as could not have been carried out, in the finished manner it has been, without a critical examination of a large number of authors, and close and patient meditation upon the contents of their works. There is nothing superficial or ill digested; nothing taken at second hand; the lecturer's mind is brought to bear, with its own original vigor, upon all the subjects that come under his notice; his opinions are frankly and fearlessly expressed, and sustained by a force of reasoning which rarely fails to produce conviction, never to inspire respect and confidence.

He adopts a method at once perspicuous and well suited to the end he has in view. He selects certain periods of history, and groups together the great events in each, investigating their relation to each other in the order of cause and effect, and their results on the civil and political condition of states and communities; preserving, as he advances, an easy and natural transition from one period to another.

This method affords occasion for philosophical reflections, in which the author is profound and sagacious, without any of the vague generalization and speculative theories which too much abound in works assuming the title of philosophical history. Professor Smyth's philosophy is of that rational kind which builds itself on established principles and truths, and in which he has so much respect for the good sense of his readers, that he is willing to address himself to their understanding. He betrays no affection for that spurious philosophy which disdains the wisdom of experience, which finds truth only in novelties, and substitutes the dreams of the imagination for the dictates of a sound judgment, soaring above or sinking below the comprehension of ordinary minds. He looks deeply into the workings of the human heart, and studies the passions of men as they have been implanted in their nature and exhibited on the great theatre of human action, tracing out their influence in mould

ing the structure of society, in raising up nations to power and glory, or bringing them down to degradation and ruin ; thus deducing lessons of practical application and utility.

He never forgets that the legitimate use of history, as a study, is to teach by examples. Like the inductive philosophy in science, the instruction sought from history proceeds from known facts to general results. History itself is a record of a series of experiments which men have tried for the purpose of promoting their well-being and happiness in a social state. Some of these experiments have succeeded, others have failed ; but the lessons in each case are valuable, as showing what is to be either imitated or avoided. To explain and enforce these lessons, drawn from a thorough knowledge of the progress of nations in political science, and of men in attaining civil liberty and a free enjoyment of their rights under different forms of government, constitutes the most useful element of the philosophy of history ; and in this part of his subject no writer has been more successful than Professor Smyth, whether we regard the extent of his inquiries, the solidity and directness of his opinions, or his felicitous manner of representing them.

His plan restricts him to a general survey, without the detail of narrative, or elaborate discussions of complicated and doubtful questions, which, however necessary they may sometimes be in a regular historical composition, are frequently more cumbersome than convincing, more tedious than instructive. His work embraces Modern History. As preparatory to his main subject, he touches upon the period immediately following the downfall of the Roman Empire ; the laws, customs, and political state of the barbarous nations of Europe ; the principal features of the Mahometan religion, and the remarkable events of the Dark Ages. In this outline he confines himself to such particulars as mark the progress of civilization and open the way to the political organizations of modern Europe, and as explain the causes of those vast changes in the affairs of the world, which have taken place within the last three hundred years. These changes and their consequences are made the theme of his subsequent lectures. Proceeding in the same spirit of philosophical



analysis, seizing upon the prominent events and pursuing them in their natural course and through their intricate combinations, he examines under separate heads the history of the European nations. Yet the periods and the states which pass in review before him are not considered as detached from each other, but as parts of a general system having their distinctive relations and uniting to constitute a whole.

A large portion of the work is devoted to England, — the origin of the British constitution, the vicissitudes it has undergone, the dangers it has encountered, the obstacles it has overcome, and the means by which it has advanced to be the consolidating principle of an empire vast in territory and power. The great struggle which long existed between the prerogative and popular claims, before the balance was duly adjusted by securing the weight of an efficient Parliament, is fully investigated and clearly explained. The characters of British statesmen, and their influence on the history of their country and the growth of its institutions, are likewise discussed with a freedom and ability which clothe the author's remarks on these subjects with peculiar interest. Nor does he speak of the eminent men of other countries with less candor or discrimination, assigning to all their just meed of praise or censure, according as they have been the benefactors of their race, ambitious demagogues, or the tools of despotism.

Other characteristics of these volumes demand high commendation. No writer could be more impartial; his sentiments are generous and liberal; he is never the blind advocate of a party, nor the defender of tortuous measures; his zeal for favorite opinions, and for men whose policy he approves and whose talents he extols, is always tempered with moderation and judgment. He does not, like too many historians, pass sentence on motives which he has only conjectured, and condemn conduct merely because he cannot discover all the reasons by which it has been prompted. He is neither the champion of a school nor the slave of a theory; he never talks of optimism or of perfectibility; he takes facts as they are presented to him, analyzes, combines, and compares them without bias or predi-

lection, and establishes his conclusions on the basis of truth and justice.

In remarking on forms of government, and the acts of princes, statesmen, and military leaders, he is equally free, on the one hand, from the narrow prejudice and illiberal invective, and, on the other, from the indiscriminate admiration and applause, in which writers of less compass of thought and less acuteness of observation are apt to indulge. He considers the government best for a people, which, when well administered, is best suited to their circumstances, and best fitted for securing the prosperity of individuals and the peace and tranquillity of the public. While he sternly rebukes all symptoms of despotism, all abuses of power, all encroachments upon rights, wherever they appear, he is not bound to a system, nor slow to discern the advantages which every system may possess, nor reluctant to bestow praise where it is due. Although friendly to reform, because society is progressive, gathering intelligence as it advances and wisdom from the experience of the past, yet he would correct errors gradually and with caution, rather than eradicate them by violence; he would repair, strengthen, and adorn the edifice, rather than undermine its foundations and triumph over its ruins. Systems of government have grown up with time, till they have become rooted in the habits, usages, customs, and often the affections of the people; to destroy the former would be to derange the latter, and to produce misery instead of happiness. Innovation is not always improvement; change may be for the worse, and is likely to be so when ill-timed or rashly directed. Revolution is an extreme remedy; it may break the chains of oppression or rivet them more strongly, according as it proceeds from just causes and is guided by prudence, or as it arises from factious discontent and is pushed forward by a reckless disregard of consequences. There are evils in all systems, there is good in all; to correct the one and retain the other, to infuse into the constitution and laws of a state the spirit of each succeeding age, and to adapt them to the increasing intelligence and wants of society, should be the policy, as it is the duty, of every statesman and legislator.

Professor Smyth's judicious estimate of the characters of men, his liberal construction of their motives, and his indulgence to the infirmities of their nature, are not confined to his political views. His benevolence rises to the higher virtue of toleration. Religion has been a powerful agent in modern civilization. He weighs with an impartial hand the impelling forces which have sprung from this source, and assigns them to their appropriate spheres. The enlargement of mind, equanimity of temper, and bland moderation, which characterize his political investigations, are equally conspicuous here. He neither assails modes of faith, nor arraigns the conscience which adopts them, nor condemns whole orders of men because they have exercised the privilege of thinking for themselves. He makes no terms with despotism seeking to disguise itself under the garb of religion, or ecclesiastical domination grasping at secular power, or the superstition which deludes men into follies and chains them in ignorance, or the fanaticism which breeds disorders and degenerates into crime; but he has a wide mantle of charity for all who show the sincerity of their belief by the calm and steady zeal with which they adhere to it, and by its benign influence on their lives as members of society and practical Christians. Even sectarian extravagance he can tolerate, when it avoids persecution, clothes itself with humility, and strives to promote peace and concord. He is no dogmatist himself, nor an approver of dogmatism in others, however it may shield itself under the imposing name of church or state. On the freedom of opinion and speech, which is the birthright of every being who can think and talk, he would lay no other restraints than are required by public order and the security of individuals. In short, although firm in his own sentiments, both in politics and religion, and maintaining them when occasions offer, yet his convictions neither harden his heart nor pervert his understanding; they do not check the current of his kind feelings, or darken his perceptions, or mislead his judgment.

These lectures were composed for young men, but they furnish nutriment for minds in every stage of culture. It is not one of their least merits, that they incite the reader to reflection, at the same



time that they supply him with materials and encourage him by examples. This is an important use of history, which Professor Smyth turns to its best account. A mere knowledge of facts is only the first rudiment of instruction, — an effort of memory, and nothing more. This knowledge is necessary in studying history, but he who proceeds no farther has scarcely entered the vestibule. Facts are the germs of profitable knowledge, which the mind must nurture and cherish, or they will decay and die. In themselves they are single and loosely connected, forming a chain whose links are perpetually falling asunder. Let them be employed for their legitimate purposes while fresh and strong; let the reader seize their fleeting spirit and incorporate it with his thoughts; let him compare and combine, reflect and draw conclusions, till impressions are stamped that will become part of himself. No branch of study calls more loudly for this kind of meditation than that of history, where the transactions of men under all imaginable circumstances are laid open, where the passions are ever at work, and where the economy of life is seen in all its phases and vicissitudes.

Another feature of this work remains to be mentioned, which contributes greatly to enhance its value.

The reader is not only taught how to read history, and what use to make of it, but he is at the same time furnished with the best guides. The principal authors, both in the English and French languages, are brought before him, with such criticisms and explanations as enable him to understand their design, character, comparative merits, and the particular periods or subjects to which they relate. Aware of the importance of this part of his plan, the lecturer has bestowed upon it special attention, and has thus rendered an invaluable service to all readers of history, who would employ their time to the best advantage, and derive instruction from the highest sources. He distinguishes books that are only to be consulted from those which are to be carefully perused, and, in referring to voluminous works, he often recommends parts and even single chapters, thereby relieving the student from the fruitless toil he would otherwise encounter in attempting to select and judge for himself. As a

critic, his discernment is quick, his decisions fair and judicious. His remarks on the characteristics of Hume as an historian, and on the style of Gibbon, are examples in point. His own style is perspicuous and forcible, without elaborate ornament or studied diction.

But the portion of the work which will be most likely to interest readers on this side of the Atlantic is the last six lectures, in which he speaks of the American Revolution. No British writer has treated this subject with so much candor, or such perfect freedom from party feelings and national prejudice; and it may at least be doubted, if any American writer can claim, on this score, a higher degree of confidence. The fault of ignorance, so justly ascribed to almost all the writers in England who have touched on that event, cannot be laid to the charge of Professor Smyth. He has examined the American side with no less diligence than the English. He has drawn from original fountains, consulted public documents, and taken as his guides Washington's official letters, Marshall, and Ramsay, whose authority he respects and in whose representations he confides. The causes of the controversy are briefly stated. Without laboring to decide whether these causes justified the measures of the British ministry in strictness of law and constitutional right, he allows, what is now assented to by all the world, that both ministers and people suffered themselves to be led astray by a mistaken policy in the first instance, and by national pride to the end of the contest. Mild government is a maxim which Professor Smyth inculcates throughout his lectures, and which he especially urges upon every sovereign power in regard to its colonies or dependent states. This maxim is strikingly illustrated by the parallel he draws between the Netherlands, shaking off the yoke of Spain, and the American colonies, asserting and maintaining their independence. The pride of Spain was tyrannical, and she lost the Netherlands; the pride of England was blind and obstinate, and she lost her colonies. A little yielding to circumstances would have saved both. It was easy to cry out faction, treason, and rebellion, and thus to kindle irritation on one side and a rancorous spirit on the other, till the breach was



past healing; but it was not easy to conquer a people borne down by wrongs which they were determined to redress. Their hearts might have been subdued and their affections won, not by coercion and harshness, but by mild treatment and a due regard to their rights. This truth, deduced from the two cases in question, is confirmed by so many examples in history, that rulers might long ago have learned from it a practical lesson of policy and interest, to say nothing of wisdom and duty.

The conduct of both parties in carrying on the American war is freely canvassed by the author. He finds little to praise in the British counsels, and some things to blame in those of the Americans. He wonders, and rightly enough, that there should be so much patriotism in passing resolves and publishing addresses, and so little in paying taxes and furnishing supplies for the army. He is surprised at the readiness to contract debts for the public benefit, and at the reluctance to recognize and provide for them. The soldiers, who had fought the battles and secured the freedom of their country, were dismissed and sent home without even a promise that they should be paid. But he justly accounts for these inconsistencies, and some others, by the weakness of the executive power. Congress could debate, resolve, and recommend, and here their functions ended. As an executive body they were feeble, in fact powerless, in regard to the most important objects of government. Nevertheless, it argues much for the virtue of the people, that they could sustain a war for so long a time under such a system. It argues more; it proves the strength of principle with which they were united, and a deep-rooted conviction of the justice of their cause, that they could be roused to such efforts and sacrifices through years of conflict, privation, and suffering.

The American patriots were not merely lovers of their country, they were lovers of mankind. Their ideas of liberty were not those of license or insubordination; nor did they regard this liberty as a conventional privilege, which a supreme power, however organized, might grant or withhold at its option. They believed it to be an element in the constitution of man, which he has a right to claim and

exercise for his own well-being. Men may agree how they will exercise it for the good of each other and of the whole. The old governments of Europe have turned it to the advantage of a few at the expense of the many. Liberty with them is fidelity to existing establishments. This may be all that the people desire, or all that they can bear, in the present state of things. The Americans found themselves in a condition to enjoy more; they had increased in numbers and grown strong on the soil of freedom; their habits of thought and of action had partaken of its spirit; and when they perceived the coils of a distant and irresponsible power gradually drawn tighter and tighter around them, it was natural that they should struggle to release themselves, and provide for their future independence and safety.

It is not inferred that Professor Smyth would agree to these sentiments in their full latitude. He thinks the British system, with its nicely balanced checks of King, Lords, and Commons, on the whole better adapted to the growth and durability of a great power, and to the preservation of the people's liberties, than any that has yet been tried. But he is not an enemy to republics, when placed on their proper footing; and he would have the experiment fairly carried out in America, especially as it has commenced under auspices entirely different from those which have proved abortive in the Old World. At all events, he is entitled to the thanks of Americans for the pains he has bestowed in describing their contest for liberty, and the impartiality and generous spirit with which he has accomplished what he has undertaken. If errors can be discovered, they are not those of negligence, a narrow mind, or a biased judgment. His character of Washington, sketched near the end of his work, is happily conceived and well delineated. In short, it would be difficult to find any treatise on the American Revolution, comprised within the compass of his six lectures, from which so much can be learned, or so accurate an estimate of the merits of both sides of the question can be formed.

J. S.

CAMBRIDGE, OCTOBER 6th, 1841.



NOTE  
TO  
THE THIRD AMERICAN EDITION

---

IN the present edition of these Lectures, it has been attempted to supply in some measure the want of that editorial care which the author himself, in consequence, as it is understood, of impaired sight, was unfortunately prevented from bestowing on them.

The variations from the former editions, resulting from the revision here undertaken, are briefly the following.

Where necessary to bring out the divisions of a subject distinctly, or to indicate a transition, or to give the proper continuity to a course of reasoning or remark, paragraphs have been divided or united, according to the nature of the case, — but in no instance have they been transposed.

Quotations, found on collation to be inexact, have been conformed to the text of the original authorities, except in a few instances where these could not be ascertained or were inaccessible, — and in some others, where it appeared to be the Lecturer's intention merely to give a condensed statement of the substance of a passage.

Inaccurate or defective references to authorities, and any errors as to matters of fact which have been incidentally observed, are pointed out in the marginal notes.

Obvious faults in punctuation and grammar have of course been corrected.

The Notes, which in the former editions are subjoined to several of the Lectures, are here, for greater convenience, brought together at the end of the volume.

The matters appended to the former American editions are reprinted with some modifications ; — the List of Books relating to the History of the United States, with a few additions by the original compiler ; the Chronological Table of Events and the Index, slightly amended. The Tables of Contemporary European Sovereigns, taken from Sir Harris Nicolas's "Chronology of History," have been found, on a critical examination, to be constructed with little of their author's usual accuracy ; they have accordingly been carefully revised throughout, — principally with the aid of the leading authority in this department, "*L'Art de vérifier les Dates*," in the octavo edition of 1818 – 37. The Table of Sovereigns of the Lesser European States, which in the original commences with the year 1699, is here, for the convenience of the student, carried back two centuries ; while, both in this and in the principal Table, the portions embracing the present century are omitted, as unnecessary to the illustration of the Lectures.

G. N.

UNIVERSITY PRESS, CAMBRIDGE, MASS.  
July 21, 1849.

TO

HENRY, MARQUIS OF LANSDOWNE.

MY LORD, —

YOU have been always distinguished for your sympathy with the welfare of your fellow-creatures, of whatever country; for your ready patronage of every art, science, or institution, contributing to the embellishment, or advancing the interests, of the community; for welcoming to the hospitality of your splendid mansion every man, whether native or foreigner, who could be supposed to have any merit deserving of your attention: it has therefore been always a source of pride to me, to have owed my Professorship to your Lordship's favorable opinion; and these Lectures, the result of my appointment, are now dedicated to your Lordship, with every sentiment of affection, gratitude, and respect.

WILLIAM SMYTH.

ST PETER'S COLLEGE, CAMBRIDGE,  
Nov., 1839.



## ADVERTISEMENT.

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THE following Lectures were drawn up to be delivered to a youthful audience, at an English University, voluntarily assembled.

The reader is requested never to lose sight of this particular circumstance, — they were to be listened to, not read ; they are now published in the hope that they may be useful to others, at a similar period of life.

Minute historical disquisition or research cannot be expected in compositions of this nature : what the author has hoped to accomplish will be found explained in the Introductory Lecture ; and the maxim of the poet seems but equitable, —

“ In every work regard the writer’s end,  
Since none can compass more than they intend.”

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LECTURES  
ON  
MODERN HISTORY.

---

INTRODUCTORY LECTURE.

1809.

I MUST avail myself of the privilege of a prefatory address to enter into some explanations with respect to the lectures I am going to deliver, which could not well find a place in the lectures themselves. I must mention to you the plan upon which they are drawn up. And I think it best to give you at once the history of my own thoughts in forming this plan, because such a detail will serve to display the general nature of the study in which you are now to engage, and will lead to observations that may afford to these lectures their best chance of being useful.

My first impressions, then, with respect to a scheme for Lectures on Modern History, were these:—That, in the first place, all detail, all narrative, were impossible. That the great subject before me was the situation of Europe in different periods of these later ages,—the progress of the human mind, of human society, of human happiness, of the intellectual character of the species, for the last fifteen centuries. Every thing, therefore, of a temporary nature was to be excluded,—all more particular and local history,—all peculiar delineations of characters, revolutions, and events, that concerned not the *general* interests of mankind. That the history of France, or Spain, or England was not to be considered separately and distinctly, but only in conjunction, each with the other; each, only as it affected by its relations the great community of Europe. That, in short, such occurrences only were to be mentioned, as indicated the character of the times,—such changes only, as left permanent effects. That a summary, an estimate of human nature, as it had shown itself, since the fall of the Roman Empire, on the great theatre of the civilized part of the world, was, if possible, to be given.

I must confess that this still appears to me to be the genuine and proper idea of a course of lectures on modern history. But to this plan the obvious objection was its extent and its difficulty. The great Lord Bacon did not find himself unworthily employed, when he was considering the existing situation, and contemplating the future advancement, of human learning ; but to look back upon the world and to consider the different movements of different nations, whether retrograde or in advance, and to state the progress of the whole from time to time, as resulting from the combined effect of the failures and successes of all the parts, — to attempt this is to attempt more than was effected even by the enterprising mind of Bacon ; for it is to appreciate the facts as well as to exhibit the theory of human society, — to weigh in the balance the conduct as well as the intelligence of mankind, — and to extend to the religion, legislation, and policy of states, and to the infinitely diversified subject of their political happiness, the same inquiry, criticism, and speculation which the wisest and brightest of mankind had been content to extend only to the more particular theme of human knowledge.

Such were the first impressions produced upon my mind by the plan that had thus occurred to me. It is very true, that, when they had somewhat subsided, I became sufficiently aware that objections like these must not be urged too far ; that a plan might be very imperfectly executed, and yet answer many of its original purposes, as far as the instruction of the hearer was concerned, and that *this* was, on the whole, sufficient, — the effect upon the hearer being the point of real consequence, not the literary failures or successes of the lecturer.

This scheme of lectures, however, I have not adopted ; for, though I might fairly have been permitted to execute it in a slight and inadequate manner, I was persuaded that lectures would be expected from me in this place long before I could have attempted to execute it in any manner, however imperfect and inadequate to my wishes. Having mentioned this reason, it is unnecessary to mention others which might also have induced me to form the same resolution.

But a plan of this sort, though rejected by me as a lecturer, should always be present to you as readers of history. By no other means can you derive the full benefit that may and should be derived from the annals of the past. Large and comprehensive views, — the connection of causes and effects, — the steady, though often slow, and, at the time, unperceived influence of general principles, — habits of calm speculation, of foresight, of deliberative and providing wisdom, — these are the lessons of instruction, and these the best advantages, to be gained by the contemplation of history ; and it is to these that the ambition of an historical student should be at all events directed.

The next scheme of lectures that occurred to me was to take particular periods of history, and to review and estimate several of them,

if possible, in a connected manner ; the period, for instance, of the Dark Ages, of the Revival of Learning, of the Reformation, of the Religious Wars, of the power and enterprises of Louis the Fourteenth, of the prosperity of Europe towards the close of the last century. These periods could not be described and examined without conveying to the hearer a very full impression, not only of the leading events, but of the general meaning and importance, of modern history. All the proper purposes of a system of lectures would be, therefore, by these means, very sufficiently answered ; and, as the plan is somewhat confined and brought within a definite compass, it has the important merit of being practicable.

But, after some deliberation, this plan, also, I have thought it best to reject ; chiefly because to attempt it would be rather to attempt to write a book, than to give lectures. I do not say that those pages which now make a good book can ever have made bad lectures. But a lecture is, after all, not a book ; and the question is, whether the same lecturer might not have improved his hearers more by a less elaborate mode of address.

Instead, then, of endeavouring to draw up any general history of Europe since the overthrow of the Roman Empire in the West, and instead of attempting any discussion of different periods under the form of regular treatises, I at last thought it best to fix my attention on my hearers only, and to confine my efforts to one point. The object, therefore, which I have selected is this, — to endeavour to assist my hearers in reading history for themselves.

Now this plan of lectures, simple as it may at first appear, will be found to comprehend a task of more than sufficient difficulty for me, and be very adequate, as I conceive, to all the purposes which lectures can attempt to accomplish for you.

For, with respect to myself, what must be the province allotted to me ? I must prefer one book to another, and must have reasons for my preference, and must therefore read and examine many. In the next place, I must, from the endless detail of European transactions, direct the attention of my hearers to such particular trains in these transactions, as will, on the whole, give, if possible, a general and commanding view of the great subjects of modern history. This cannot be attempted by me without meditating the whole, and considering the relations of all the different parts with great care and patience. Lastly, I must endeavour, if I can, to state why particular periods or characters in history have become interesting, and to convey some portion of that interest to my hearers.

Such are the objects which I have selected as the fittest to excite my own wishes and engage my own labors.

What, in the mean time, is to be the task that is to devolve upon you ? It must be for you to carry with you into your own studies the advice I have offered, the criticisms I have made, the moral sym-



pathies, the political principles, by which I appear to have been myself affected; and these must, all of them, become the topics of your own reflection and examination.

It is, therefore, already evident, that we have, each of us, in our several provinces, enough to perform, if we do but endeavour to discharge with proper diligence and ardor the several duties that belong to us.

Turning, now, from the consideration of the plan of the lectures, to the mode in which I have endeavoured to execute it, as my object was to assist my hearers in reading history for themselves, my first inquiry was this: — What course of historical reading it would be fittest to recommend, — what were the books, and how were they to be read?

The first direction of a student's mind would be, I knew, to have recourse to *general histories*, to summaries and abridgments of history; for in this manner it would naturally be thought that the greatest possible historical information might be procured with the least possible exertion. I therefore devoted a considerable portion of time to the General History of Voltaire, the Modern History of Russell, and to the French General History by the Chevalier Mehegan; all works of merit and reputation; the first and last of great celebrity.

The first advice, then, which I shall take upon me to give, as the result of my experience, is this: — not to read general histories and abridgments of history, as a more summary method of acquiring historical knowledge. There is *no* summary method of acquiring knowledge. Abridgments of history have their use; but this is not their use, nor can be. When the detail is tolerably known, the summary can then be understood, but not before. Summaries may always serve, most usefully, to revive the knowledge that has been before acquired, may throw it into proper shapes and proportions, and leave it in this state upon the memory, to supply the materials of subsequent reflection. But general histories, if they are read first, and before the particular history is known, are a sort of chain of which the links seem not connected; contain representations and statements which cannot be understood, and therefore cannot be remembered; and exhibit to the mind a succession of objects and images, each of which appears and retires too rapidly to be surveyed, and, when the whole vision has passed by, as soon it does, scarcely a trace of it is found to remain. Were I to look from an eminence over a country which I had never before seen, I should discover only the principal objects, — the villa, the stream, the lawn, or the wood. But if the landscape before me had been the scene of my childhood or lately of my residence, every object would bring along with it all its attendant associations, and the picture that was presented to the eye would be the least part of the impression that was received by

the mind. Such is the difference between reading general histories before, or after, the particular histories to which they refer.

I must not, indeed, omit to observe, that there are some parts of history so obscure and of so little importance, that general accounts of them are all that can either be expected or required. Abridgments and general histories must here be used. Not that much can be thus received, but that much is not wanted, and that what little is necessary may be thus obtained.

I must also confess that general histories may in like manner be resorted to for the purpose of acquiring a general notion of the great leading features of any particular history; they may be to the student what maps are to the traveller, and give an idea of the nature of the country, and of the magnitude and situation of the towns, through which he is to pass; they may teach him what he is to expect, and at what points he is to be the most diligent in his inquiries. Viewed in this light, general histories may be considered as of great importance, and that even *before* the perusal of the particular histories to which they refer; but they must never be resorted to, except in the instances and for the purposes just mentioned, — they must not be used as substitutes for more minute and regular histories, not as short methods of acquiring knowledge. They are meant to give, and they may most usefully give, commanding views, comprehensive estimates, general impressions; but these cannot supersede that labor which must be endured by all those who would possess themselves of information.

If, therefore, general histories and summaries of history are not to be read as a short way of acquiring historical knowledge, and if history, when it is of importance, must be read in the detail, a most melancholy prospect immediately presents itself; for the books of historical detail, the volumes which constitute modern history, are innumerable; Alps on Alps arise. This is a difficulty of all others the most invincible and embarrassing. I must endeavour to consider it with all possible attention.

The great authority on a subject like this is Dufresnoy, — Dufresnoy's Chronology. After laying down a course of historical reading, such as he conceives indispensably necessary and quite practicable, he calmly observes that the time which it is to take up is ten years; and this, too, upon a supposition, that much more of every day is to be occupied with study than can possibly be expected, and that many more pages shall be read in the twenty-four hours than can possibly be reflected upon.

I remember to have heard that a man of literature and great historical reading had once been speaking of the great French historian Thuanus in those terms of commendation which it was natural for him to employ, when alluding to a work of such extraordinary merit. A youth who had listened to him, with all the laudable ardor



of his particular time of life, had no sooner retired from his company than he instantly sent for Thuanus, resolving to begin immediately the perusal of a performance so celebrated, and from that moment to become a reader of history. Thuanus was brought to him, — seven folio volumes. Ardent as was the student, surprise was soon succeeded by total and irremediable despair. Art was indeed too long, he must have thought, and life too short, if such was to be his entrance to knowledge, and not indeed to knowledge, but to one department among many others of human inquiry.

Now this effect was certainly not the effect which was intended. All risk of any event like this must be most carefully avoided. And, on the whole, it is sufficiently evident, that any lecturer in history cannot be better employed than in studying how to render the course of reading which he proposes as short, that is, as practicable, as it can possibly be made, — such as, amid the natural occupations of human life, may be accomplished. It is in vain to recommend to the generality of readers books which it might be the labor of years to peruse; they will certainly not be perused; and the lecturer, while he conceives that he has discharged his office, has only made the mistake so natural to his situation, that of supposing that there is no art, or science, or species of knowledge in existence, but the one he professes, and that his audience are, like himself, to be almost exclusively occupied in its consideration.

But evils are more easily described than remedied. What is in this case to be done? Are the great writers of history not to be read? What is the study of history but the reading of them?

The first object, therefore, of my anxieties, in consequence of this difficulty, has been, through the whole of my lectures, to recommend, not as many books as the subject admitted of, but as few. And I am the more at ease while I do this, because the best authors in every different part of history have their margins crowded with references to other books and to original authorities; and such readers as are called upon to study any *particular* point or period of history more minutely than can *in general* be necessary need be at no loss for proper materials on which to exercise their diligence, and cannot want to receive from me an enumeration of those references and means of information which they can in this manner so readily find.

But I have ventured to do more than this; for I have not only recommended as few books as possible, but I have recommended only parts of books, and sometimes only a few pages in a volume.

This, it will be said, is surely a superficial way of reading history. What can be known of a book, when only a part is read? This is not the manner in which subjects were studied by our ancestors, the scholars of other times. But there were giants in those days, it will be added, and we are but a puny race of sciolists, who cannot, it



seems, find leisure enough even to peruse, much less to rival, the works which their labors have transmitted for our instruction.

I mean not to deny that there is considerable weight in this objection; and nothing but the intolerable perplexity of the case, its insurmountable difficulty, the impossibility of adopting any other course, would ever have induced me to propose to students to read books in parts; but I must repeat it, that human life does not now admit of any other expedient, and the alternative to which we are reduced, in plain truth, is this, — either to read books of history in this manner, or not to read them at all.

He knows little of human learning or of himself who venerates not the scholars of former times, the great intellectual laborers that have preceded us. It would be an ill interpretation, indeed, of what I shall recommend, if it be concluded, that, because I think their volumes are often to be read in parts only, I do so from the slightest feeling of disrespect to authors like these, or to the great literary works that they have so meritoriously accomplished. But the condition of society is continually changing, and the situation of our ancestors is no longer ours. In no respect has it altered more than in the interior economy of the management of time, more especially of a student's time. Avenues of inquiry and knowledge have been opened to us, that were to them unknown. The regions of science, for instance, may be considered as a world lately found, hitherto but partially explored, and in itself inexhaustible. What are we to say, in like manner, of the avocations, and even amusements, of social life, which have everywhere been multiplied by the growing prosperity of mankind, — many of them not only intellectual, but intellectual in the highest sense of the word? The patient and solitary student can never be a character without its value and respectability; but the character can no longer be met with, as it once was, now that the genius of men is attracted to the inventions of art, the discoveries of science, and the various prizes of affluence and of honor, that are more and more held up to ambition, as a country more and more improves in civilization and prosperity.

There is another consideration which must not be forgotten, when this method which I have mentioned, of reading books in parts, is considered. Literature, like society, advances step by step. Every treatise and book of value contains some particular part that is of more value than the rest, — something by which it has added to the general stock of human knowledge or entertainment, — something on account of which it was more particularly read and admired while a new book, and on account of which it continues to be read and admired while an old one. Now it is these different portions of every different volume, that united form the effective literature or knowledge of every civilized nation, and, when collected from the different languages of Europe, the literature and knowledge of the

most civilized portion of mankind. It is by these parts of more peculiar and original merit, that these volumes are known. It is these to which every man of matured talents and finished education *alone* adverts. It is these which he endeavours chiefly to remember. It is these that make up the treasures, and constitute the capital, as it were, of his mind. The remainder of each volume is but that subordinate portion which has no value but as connected with the other, and is often made up of those errors and imperfections which are, in fact, the inseparable attendants of every human production, which are observed and avoided by every writer or reasoner who follows, and which gradually become in one age only the exploded characteristics of another. It is thus that human knowledge becomes progressive, and that the general intelligence of society gains a new station in advance, from the reiterated impulses of each succeeding mind.

It therefore by no means follows, when books are read in parts, that they are therefore read superficially. "Some books," says my Lord Bacon, "are to be tasted, some few to be chewed and digested: that is, some books are to be read only in parts; others to be read, but not curiously; and some few to be read wholly, and with diligence and attention." The same may be pretty generally said of the different portions of the same work. Much care and circumspection must undoubtedly be used in selecting and discriminating the parts to be tasted, to be chewed, and to be digested. The more youthful the mind, the less skilful will be the choice, and the more hazardous the privilege, thus allowed, of reading pages by a glance and chapters by a table of contents. But the mind, after some failures and some experience, will materially improve in this great and necessary art,—the art of reading much, while reading little. Now, if there be any department of human inquiry into which this very delicate, difficult, and dangerous mode of reading may be introduced, it is surely that of history. Whatever may be thought of books of science or of knowledge, in books of history, at least, there is every variety in the importance of different passages. Neither events, nor characters, nor periods of time are at all the same or of equal consequence. Nor are the writers of like merit with each other, or of like authority; nor have they written with the same views, nor are they to be consulted for the same purposes. There is ample room, therefore, for the exercise of judgment in the preference we give to one writer above another, and in the different degrees of attention which we exercise upon one event, or character, or era, rather than another; and as the powers as well as the opportunities of the human mind are bounded, it behooves us well to consider what is the nature of the burden we impose upon our faculties; for, assuredly, he who is very anxious to load his memory with much will in general have little which in the hour of need he can produce, and still less of which his understanding has ascertained the value.



Such are the considerations by which I have been reconciled to the modes I have proposed, of struggling with the difficulties I have described.

Before I proceed, I must turn aside for a moment to say one word, in the way of digression, upon this most important subject of memory.

It cannot but be supposed that he who reads and retains the most will always have a superiority over those whose talents or diligence are, in truth, inferior. But this only renders it a point of prudence the more pressing upon every man to inform himself thoroughly of the nature of his own capacity, particularly of his memory, and to provide accordingly. It is peculiarly so on an historical student. After having considered what he may pass over slightly and what he must regularly read, he may next consider what he is to remember minutely, what generally, and what, for the purpose of remembering better things, he may suffer himself to think of no more.

Now what I would wish to suggest to my hearers, more especially to those whose memories are either of a common or of an inferior description, is this, — that general impressions, that general recollections, are of far greater importance than might be at first supposed. General impressions will enable us to treasure up in our minds all the great leading lessons, all the philosophy, of history. General impressions are quite sufficient to suggest the similarity of cases. They will, therefore, always enable a reader of history to conjecture with sufficient accuracy whether the details, if referred to, would, on any given occasion, be of importance. General impressions are sufficient to prevent us from making positive mistakes ourselves, and even from suffering them to be made by others. We are aware that there is something which we have read on the point at issue, though we do not precisely recollect it. But the apprehension that is left on the mind, obscure and imperfect as it may be, still suffers a sort of violence, when any statement positively inaccurate is presented to it. We, at least, suspend our judgment. We require that the question may not be determined till after proper examination.

General impressions, indeed, will not furnish a reasoner in conversation, an advocate at the bar, or a debater in Parliament, with proper authorities, at the very moment of need, to establish his statements and illustrate his arguments, or with all the proper materials of wit and eloquence. A weak memory can never afford to its possessor the advantages which result from a memory capacious and retentive; yet may it still be very adequate, by careful management, to many of the most useful purposes of reflection and study; it may still enable a man to benefit himself and to administer to the instruction of others.

And now, before I turn away from this particular part of my prefatory address, I must confess to you, that, after all the expedients



I have resorted to for the purpose of abridging your labors, I am well aware that many of you will still be disheartened and repelled by the number of books which you will hear me quote and refer to, before my lectures are brought to a conclusion. I must, therefore, enter still further into detail, and call your attention to the syllabus which I have drawn up, and which you can hereafter consult.

You will there observe, in the first place, a course of reading pointed out, so short, that it would be quite improper to suppose that the most indolent or the most busy among you cannot now or hereafter accomplish it. This first course, as you will see by attending to the notes, may be enlarged into a second; this again into a third. In this manner I have endeavoured to provide for every different case that may exist among you. You have three different courses exhibited to you.

But with respect to the remainder of the syllabus and the number of books mentioned in the lectures, which may be considered as the fourth and last course, you will see, on a little reflection, that it is fit you should not only read any particular shorter course, but hear and understand what may be found in one still larger, even if you should not be likely hereafter to attempt it. Your time will not be entirely thrown away while you are listening to the references I make and the descriptions I give, even though you should not always turn to the particular books and passages I thus recommend. You will at least know, after a certain indistinct manner, what history is, — and this is the great use of all public lectures; for public lectures may give you a general idea of any science or subject, but can never, of themselves, do much more, — they can never put you in possession of it. Add to this, that of the whole of this last and most extended course, thus presented in these lectures to your curiosity, you may read minutely any parts that may more particularly interest you, and not others, — the Reformation, for instance, or the great struggle in the times of Charles the First. Do not, therefore, be alarmed, any of you, when you see and hear the number of books I may refer you to.

Finally, I must take upon myself to assure you, that, if you show the syllabus to any man of letters, or any real student of the history of this or other countries, you will hear him only expressing his surprise that such and such books, which he will mention, are omitted, and that such and such portions of history (of India, for instance, or Ireland) are not even so much as alluded to. Believe me, he will not blame your lecturer for having offered too much to your curiosity. He will rather suppose him not sufficiently aware of all the proper objects of historical inquiry. Men of letters and real statesmen never cease to read history, as they never cease to occupy themselves in every different department of elegant and useful literature. Reading and reflection become with them a business and a pleasure, ceasing but with their lives.

Having thus endeavoured to give you some idea of the object of these lectures, and the general manner in which they are to be conducted, I must now say a word with respect to their extent. It had not been my original intention to bring them down lower than the breaking out of the French Revolution; at that memorable period, modern history appeared to begin anew, and I long remained in the persuasion, that my successors, not to speak of myself, would for some time scarcely find it within their competence to undertake an estimate of this tremendous event, — its origin, its progress, and its consequences. I had therefore always bounded my plan by the American Revolution; and, after executing what I had thus proposed to myself as a proper object of my labor, I remained for some few years without making any further attempt. At last I thought it my duty to endeavour to go on. But, even in executing my first original plan, my progress was slow. I had many books to read and examine, to ascertain whether they were to be recommended or not, whether to a certain extent, whether at all. Much of my labor can never appear in any positive shape, and will chiefly operate in saving my hearers from that very occupation of time which has so interrupted the advance of my own exertions. I may point out to others, as paths to be avoided, paths where I have myself wandered in vain, and whence I have returned fatigued and disappointed.

Thus much with respect to the object, the method, and the extent of my lectures.

And now I must call the attention of my hearers to a difficulty which belongs to all public lectures on history, and which I conceive to be of considerable importance. It is this. A lecturer must refer sometimes to books which have not been read at all by his hearers, and perpetually to those that have not been read lately or with very minute attention. He must presuppose a knowledge which has not been acquired, or not retained. He must, therefore, often make remarks which cannot be judged of, deliver sentiments and opinions which must necessarily be unintelligible, and make frequent allusions which cannot be felt or comprehended by those whom he addresses. The truth is, that a lecturer arranges and writes down what he has to deliver while full of his subject, with all the information he can collect fresh and present to his mind; and he then approaches his hearers, who have in the mean time undertaken no labor of the kind, and are furnished with no equal advantages. The lecturer is in one situation, and the hearer in another. And this is the reason why lectures on the subject of history must always be found, at the time of delivery, more or less inefficient, and therefore unsatisfactory, — why they must even be listened to with difficulty, certainly not without an almost continued effort of gratuitous attention.

I by no means suppose that I have avoided this very serious difficulty; on the contrary, it is one which must belong to every system



of lectures, and which I conceive both my hearers and myself will have constantly to struggle with. I have selected, for instance, different books, and different parts of the same book, for the student's consideration; and the reasons of my preference, though I give them, cannot be estimated by my hearers, till the references I propose have been made. Again, I have directed my attention more particularly to some portions of the history of Europe than to others; but, while I am delivering those general remarks to which they have given occasion in my own mind, I cannot suppose that the details on which those remarks are founded can be present to my hearers, or, therefore, that my remarks can be properly understood: the details not being known, the interest which such details have excited in me can never be conveyed by me to those who hear me; for it is only by the actual perusal of circumstances and facts that interest can be excited: curiosity, indeed, may be raised by a general description, but little more. Add to this, that when any particular topic connected with history, or any particular period in the history of any country, has been well considered by any writer or historian, I have thought it better to *refer* to the author than to incorporate his observations into my own lectures. A blank will therefore be repeatedly left, as I proceed, in the mind of my hearer, though it may have been filled up in my own; and this interval in the train of events or topics presented to him must remain unoccupied, and the whole chain be left imperfect, till all the different links have been regularly supplied by his own subsequent diligence.

Inconveniences like these I have found myself totally unable to remedy; and as they will operate as unfavorably to me as to you, we must each be content to compound with them in the best manner we can, and limit our mutual expectations to what is practicable: such attention as you can furnish, I must be happy to receive; and you must on your part endeavour to listen to me, on the supposition that what you hear, whether now entirely comprehended or not, will be applicable, if remembered, to your own reading hereafter, and therefore possibly of benefit.

There is one point, however, which is so material, that, though I have alluded to it before, I must again recall it to your attention. It is this,—that my hearers are to resort to me, not to receive historical knowledge, but to receive hints that may be of use to them while they are endeavouring to acquire it for themselves. The great use, end, and triumph of all lectures is to excite and teach the hearer to become afterwards a lecturer to himself,—to facilitate his progress, perhaps to shorten his course,—to amplify his views,—to make him advance to a subject, if possible, in the united character of a master and a scholar. A hearer is not to sit passive, and to expect to see performed for him those tasks which he only can perform for himself. It is from a mistake of this nature that they who attend



public lectures often retire from them with strong sensations of disappointment. They have sought impossibilities. They who listen to lectures must be content to become wise, only as men can become wise, — by the exercise, the discipline, the warfare, and the fatigue of their own faculties, amid labors to be endured and difficulties to be surmounted. The temple of wisdom, like that of virtue, must be placed on an eminence.

Having now endeavoured to explain the design, the method, and the extent of my lectures, and to state the difficulties which my hearer and myself will have mutually to encounter, it may be necessary to make some observations on the end and use, not, indeed, of lectures in history, but of history itself.

Curiosity is natural, and therefore history will always be read; and as he who has any thing to relate becomes immediately of importance to others and to himself, history will always be written.

History is a source of pleasure; a piece of history is at least a sort of superior novel; it is at least a story, and often a busy one; it has its heroes and its catastrophes; it can engage attention, and, though wanting in that force and variety and agitation of passion which a work of imagination can exhibit, still, as it is founded in truth, it can in this manner compensate for the calmer nature of its materials, and has always been found capable of administering amusement even to the most thoughtless and uninformed.

But as others will read, when even the thoughtless read, and as history is generally read in early life, it has always been one instrument, among others, of education. It is not too much to say, that the whole character of the European nations would have been totally different, if the classic histories of antiquity had not come down to them; and if their youth had not been, through every succeeding generation, animated and inspired by the examples which are there displayed, of integrity and patriotism, of eloquence and valor.

But every nation has also its particular annals and its own models of heroism and genius. The political influence of history may, therefore, often be of inestimable value; it may tell a people of their ancestors, of their freedom and renown, their honorable struggles, sacrifices, and success; and it may warn them not to render useless, by their own degeneracy, the elevated virtues of those who went before them.

But history may do more than this; it may exhibit to a people the rallying points of their constitution, the fortresses and strongholds of their political happiness; and it may teach them a sort of wisdom unbought by their own dreadful experience, a sort of wisdom which shall operate, at the moment of need, with all the rapidity and force and accuracy of instinct.

History is of high moral importance; for the wise, the good, and the brave can thus anticipate and enjoy the praise of ages that are

unborn, and be excited to the performance of actions which they might not otherwise have even conceived. It is probable, too, that men of bad passions, and certainly men of doubtful character, are sometimes checked by the prospect of that awful censure which they must endure, that lasting reproach and detestation with which their memories must be hereafter loaded by the inevitable judgments of mankind. Undoubtedly, too, the man of injured innocence, the man of insulted merit, has invariably reposed himself with confidence on the future justice of the historian; has often spoken peace to his indignant and afflicted spirit, by dwelling in imagination on the refuge which was thus to be afforded him, even on the theatre of *this* world, from the tyranny of fortune or the wrongs of the oppressor. These are services to mankind above all price; and the Muse of History has ever been of saintly aspect and awful form, the guardian of the virtues of humanity.

There are other important purposes to which history may be made subservient.

Unless the past be known, the present cannot be understood; records, therefore, and memorials often form a very material part of professional study.

To the philosopher, history is a faithful mirror, which reflects to him the human character under every possible variety of situation and color, and thus furnishes him with the means of amplifying and confirming the knowledge of our common nature.

But history also exhibits to the philosopher the conduct and fortunes of mankind continued through many ages, and it therefore enables him to trace the operation of events, to see the connection of causes and effects, and to establish those general principles which may be considered by the statesman, if not as axioms, as the best guides, at least, that can be found, for his conduct, in his management of the affairs of mankind.

It is the misfortune in general of the man of reflection, and always of the intelligent statesman, that he has to combat with the prejudices of those around him, and as arguments can always be produced on each side of a question, while he has only reasoning to oppose to reasoning, he is little likely to succeed; but an example properly made out from history assumes the appearance of a fact, and embarrasses and silences opposition, till all further resistance is at length, in some succeeding generation, withdrawn. It is thus that a Montesquieu, a Smith, or a Hume, by the application of general principles, exemplified by facts, to systems of national policy, may sometimes be enabled, however slowly, to expand and rectify the contracted and unwilling understandings of mankind.

Such are the uses of history, the uses which it has always served. There are others to which it *might* be made subservient.

It *might* teach lessons of moderation to governments, and, when



the lesson is somewhat closely presented, it sometimes does. But cabinets are successive collections of men whose personal experience has not been long continued; and they therefore act too often with the blind passions of an individual, and are so habituated to temporary expedients, to making provision for the day which is going over them, and to the rough management of mankind, that, when they are approached by the man of reflection and prospective wisdom, they are not sufficiently disposed to listen to what he has to suggest or to object; they are too apt to dismiss with little ceremony his admonitions and his plans; and when they speak of them, it is, for the most part, in some language of their own, under some general appellation of "theory and nonsense," or perhaps of "metaphysics."

History, by its general portraits of different states and kingdoms, might teach any particular people the infinite diversity of human characters and opinions, and inspire them with sentiments of general kindness and toleration abroad and at home. But history is, on the contrary, generally converted by a people to the purpose of perpetuating religious or political dissensions, and of hardening those antipathies which it should rather remove or soften; its examples are appealed to; the characters of offence and blood, that were obliterated or grown faint by age, are traced out and colored anew; and it is forgotten that such unhappy animosities have no longer any proper object or reasonable excuse.

Having thus endeavoured to give some general idea of the purposes and value of history, it is necessary, before I conclude, to observe, that there is one objection to history, too imposing and too weighty not to be alluded to and examined. It is no other than this,—that history, after all, is not truth; that it neither is nor ever can be; that the affairs of the world are carried on by a machinery known only to the real actors in the scene, the rulers of kingdoms and the ministers of cabinets,—a machinery which must for ever be concealed from the observation of the public, particularly of historians, men of study and retirement, who know nothing of that business of the world which they are so ready to describe and to explain.

This is not unfrequently the language of ministers themselves, at least of those who are somewhat of an ordinary cast,—practical men, as they are called; more distinguished for their talents in the despatch of business than for their genius. "Do not read history to me," said Sir Robert Walpole, one of the best specimens of them,—(his son, it seems, had hoped, in this manner, to amuse the languor of a man who, because he was no longer in office, knew not how to employ himself,)—"Do not read history, for that I know must be false."

Lord Bolingbroke, on the contrary, a statesman also, writes let



ters, in his retirement, on the study and use of history, and even discusses the very point before us, and maintains the credibility of history.

Ministers like Sir Robert Walpole may on these occasions be not a little suspected of something like affectation, — of being dupes to their art. Our own king James the First was the most egregious pedant of this kind on record; the mysteries of his state-craft, as he called it, were deemed by him to be so profound, that they were not to be comprehended even by the houses of Parliament or men of any ordinary nature; and Walpole himself might have been thought by this royal trifier as unfit as the historian was thought by Walpole to penetrate into the secrets of the world.

The short state of the question seems to be, that history consists of the narrative of facts, and of explanations of those facts, — that the facts and events are points which are perfectly ascertainable. Nor will this, indeed, be denied. But with respect to the explanations, how the events related came actually to take place, points of this kind must always be matters of investigation, to be traced out by the same processes of reasoning which are applied on all similar occasions through life, — from a comparison of events and of appearances with the acknowledged principles of human actions. Mistakes may sometimes be made, as by juries on a trial; but this is not a sufficient reason for concluding that no judgment can be formed.

It is impossible, to say, in general, that explanations always can be given, or never can be given; each particular point becomes a particular question, to be decided on by its own merits; in every instance, the proper inquiry is, whether the explanation offered be or be not sufficient.

Historians have always affected, and have generally exercised, great circumspection in their decisions. It must be remembered what the merits of an historian are supposed to be; not eloquence, not imagination, not science, — but patience, discrimination, and caution, — diligence in amassing his materials, strict impartiality in displaying them, sound judgment in deciding upon them.

Mankind endeavour, in the same manner, to judge, in their turn, upon their historians; their sources of intelligence, their industry, their candor, their good sense, — all these become the subjects of the public criticism; and at last a decision is pronounced, a decision that is not likely to be ultimately wrong.

It is not pretended, that history, if written at the time, can be in all points depended upon; or that truth can become entirely visible till some interval has elapsed, and the various causes that are always operating to produce the discovery of it have had full opportunity to act.

And lastly, there are facts and events that have occurred in the

world, of which history does not undertake to give any solution ; and historical writers are certainly not guilty of the folly of professing to explain every thing.

Were any of these ordinary ministers to be asked what means they always employed in the management of mankind, they would answer, without hesitation, Their leading interests and passions ; and they would laugh at any of their associates in a cabinet who depended upon the more delicate principles of individual character. Would it not be strange, then, that such leading interests and passions as they have made use of should not be afterwards visible to the eyes of an historian ? Are they not themselves, though sitting in a cabinet, collections of men, influenced by their own leading interests and passions, like their fellow-mortals without ? How are these, in like manner, to remain for ever impenetrable and unintelligible ?

Finally, it must be observed that the writers of history are by no means to be considered as excluded from all knowledge of those petty intrigues on which so much is supposed to depend. Private memoirs and the letters of actors in the scene are very often referred to by historians ; they are sought for with diligence, they are always thoroughly sifted and examined. In the course of half a century after the events, the public are generally put into possession of such documents as even the objectors to history ought to think sufficient to explain the mysteries of intrigue, and, therefore, even in *their* view of the subject, the transactions of the world.

On the whole, therefore, to call history a romance, and to say that it must necessarily be false, is to confound all distinctions of human testimony, criticism, and judgment. Sweeping positions of this kind occur in other subjects as well as this of the study of history ; and, after a little examination, may be quietly dismissed, as the offspring of indolence or spleen, or that love of paradox, which may sometimes assist the sagacity, but more often misleads the decisions of the understanding.

One word more in reference to this objection, and I have done. Something may, perhaps, be conceded to it. It is always difficult to estimate, with perfect accuracy, the moral characters of men ; that is, to compare exactly the temptation that has been incurred with the resistance that has been made, — the precise motives of the agent with his actual conduct. And this, which is so true in private life, may be still more so in public. It may not always be easy to determine, in a minister or a party, what there was of mistake, what of good intention, what of uncontrollable necessity, in their apparent faults.

It may be allowed, therefore, that the moral characters of statesmen may not always be exactly estimated. But it must be observed, at the same time, that in many instances these moral characters are appreciated differently by different historians, and are confessedly a



subject of historical difficulty; that here, therefore, no mistake is made; and that mankind, though very likely to praise or censure too vehemently at first, are not likely to be materially inaccurate at last. Add to this, that statesmen, who perceive that their conduct may hereafter be liable to misrepresentation, have it always in their power, and have in general been induced, to leave documents to their family for the purpose of explaining their views and justifying their measures; and as they know beforehand the nature of that tribunal of posterity which is to determine on their merits, the conclusion is, if they refuse to plead, that they foresee a verdict against which they have nothing satisfactory to urge, and which is therefore right.

But I must now conclude. Many years that preceded, and many that followed, the first opening of these lectures, in 1809, were years of such unexampled, afflicting, and awful events, the progress of the French Revolution and the power of Bonaparte, that the mind was kept too agitated and too anxious to be properly at leisure for the ordinary sympathies of peaceful study. This effect had been more particularly felt by those who were to read history. Who could be interested about the German constitution, when it was no more? about the republics of Holland or of Italy, when they had perished? Who could turn to the Muse of History, when she seemed to have lost her proper character, — not fitted, as she once had been, to show us the kingdoms of the earth and the glory of them, but rather, like the Sibyl, to conduct us to the land of shades, to a world that could no longer be thought our own? I need no longer endeavour to fortify my hearers against the languor and the very distaste for history which circumstances so melancholy were so fitted to produce. But the leading remark which I then made I may still retain. It was this: — That, though the more minute peculiarities of history may cease to engage our attention, its graver subjects may have now, more than ever, a claim upon our powers of reflection and inquiry. History may have less of amusement for our leisure, but may offer much more of instruction for our active thoughts. The mere relater of events may be now less fitted to detain us with his details; but to the philosophic historian we shall henceforward be compelled to listen with a new and deeper anxiety. If history be the school of mankind, it must be confessed that its lessons are at length but too complete; and that states and empires may now be considered in all their positions and relations, from the commencement to the termination of their political existence. We may see what have been the causes of their prosperity; we may trace the steps by which they have descended to degradation and ruin.

The truth is, that these tremendous years have made such studies as we are now to engage in, considered in this point of view, of far more than ordinary importance; and, whether we consider the situation of the world, or of our own domestic polity, it is but too plain



that neither indolence nor ignorance can be any longer admitted in our young men of education and property; it is but too plain that political mistakes, at all times dangerous, may to us be fatal; it is quite impossible to say how much may not depend on the intelligence and virtue of the rising generation.

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## LECTURE I.

1809.

### BARBARIANS AND ROMANS.

OF the ancient world we derive our knowledge from the Sacred Scriptures and the writings of Greece and Rome. We have no other sources of information on which we can well depend; but every such information must be at all times interesting. There is no nation, however removed from us by distance or by time, whose history will not be always a subject of rational curiosity to a reflecting mind; yet the student of ancient history will find his attention irresistibly drawn to three particular nations, — the Greeks, the Romans, and the Jews. These are names for ever associated with our best feelings and our first interests. The poets and the orators, the sages and the heroes, of Greece and Rome still animate our imaginations and instruct our minds; and the lawgiver of Israel led his people from Egypt to give birth to the prophets of our religion, and, when the fulness of time was come, to the SAVIOUR of the world.

Ancient history is not excluded, a knowledge of it is presupposed, in the study of modern history, — a knowledge, at least, of those events which can now be ascertained, and of those nations more particularly whose taste, philosophy, and religion are still visible in our own. Ancient history at last conducts us to the exclusive consideration of the Romans. Rome is the only figure left in the foreground of the picture; but in the distance are seen the northern nations, who are now to come forward and to share with the Romans our curiosity and attention.

These nations had already been but too well known to the Roman people. They had destroyed five consular armies, — encountered Marius, — contended with Julius Cæsar, — annihilated Varus and his three legions, and given the title of Germanicus to the first Roman of his age.

In the time of Marcus Antoninus a general union was formed by the Barbarians, and they were not subdued till after a long and doubtful conflict.

About the middle of the third century, under the reign of Valerian and Gallienus, they began everywhere to press forward, and were seen fairly struggling with the Romans for the empire of Europe.

Here, then, we are to make our first pause; we are to stop and reflect upon the scene before us. We have the civilized and uncivilized portions of the world *contending*, — we have the two great divisions of mankind, which then existed, drawn up in array. What was the exact character of each? Which was likely to prevail? What was to be the result of this strange and tremendous collision? These are the great questions that occur at this remarkable juncture, at this critical interval between the ancient and modern history of the European nations. We are not without our means of inquiry into this interesting subject. We will take each of these questions in its order.

1st. What were the exact characters of the Barbarians and the Romans at this extraordinary crisis? With respect to the Barbarians, — fortunately for us, they fell under the observation, first of one of the most celebrated men, and afterwards of one of the most celebrated writers of antiquity, — of Cæsar and of Tacitus: to them we must refer. I will say a word of each in his order.

The Commentaries of Cæsar must be consulted, not only in the sixth book, but in the first and fourth. And here I must observe, that, though the Celts or Gauls are not to be confounded with the Gothic nations, who finally overran the Roman Empire, still there is not a part of the work that is not connected with the general subject; the whole is a picture of the two great portions into which mankind might then be divided (the civilized and the barbarians), while it professes to be only an account of the campaigns of Cæsar in Gaul. I will cite an example or two; and I do this the more readily, and the more at length, that I may, as early as possible, and as strongly as possible, enforce upon the minds of my hearers the following remark: — that there is nothing of so much consequence to the reader of history, as to acquire the art of drawing from an original author such inferences as the author himself never expected would be made by his readers, and perhaps never intended they should make. Cæsar, for instance, is not giving an avowed description of the Germans, when he gives us the reply of Ariovistus; yet how could he have described the military force of the country more strongly? “Fight us, if you please,” said the bold Barbarian; “you will learn to know us; we are a nation that have been under no roof within the last fourteen years.” “Quum vellet, congregaretur; intellecturum, quid invicti Germani, exercitissimi in armis, qui intra annos quatuordecim tectum non subissent, virtute possent.”

Again, Cæsar does not profess to illustrate the unsettled nature of these nations and their frequent migrations; yet these facts appear in every page of his work. He begins with the migration of the Helvetii. What was the reason? They found, it seems, their territory inadequate to their numbers and unworthy of their renown. From one passage we may collect what their territory was; from another, their numbers: and as the population could scarcely have been that of nine to a square mile, the fact must have been, though the country was mountainous, that they were fierce and restless, and unskilled in agriculture. They stated their fighting men to be ninety-two thousand; and with this force they were ready to undertake an expedition of this doubtful nature. After a conflict with Cæsar, little more than a fourth of the *whole nation* returned; that is, nearly three hundred thousand people must have perished, — a specimen of the calamities by which these migrations must have been often attended.

Again, Cæsar is giving no description of the unhappy state of mankind at this period; yet, after telling us the story of the Aduatici (B. ii.), and speaking of a stronghold into which they had thrown themselves, as a last resource, his words are these: — “*Postridie ejus diei, refractis portis, quum jam defenderet nemo, atque intromissis militibus nostris, sectionem ejus oppidi universam Cæsar vendidit: ab his, qui emerant, capitum numerus ad eum relatus est, quinquaginta trium millium,*” — that is, in fact, there seems to have been no difficulty in selling, as slaves, fifty-three thousand people at a time, in the heart of Europe. No occurrence can be mentioned more as a thing of course; such we know from other sources was the common fate of the vanquished, at a time when war seems to have been the great business of human life. What, then, must have been the state of mankind?

Cæsar is not taking any pains to illustrate the military character of either the Barbarians or the Romans; yet he tells us that the Nervii, from the dead bodies of their countrymen, threw their darts, as from an eminence, and seized and returned the *pila* which had been hurled at them by the Romans, — “*His dejectis, et coacervatis cadaveribus, qui superessent, ut ex tumulo, tela in nostros conjicerent, pilaque intercepta remitterent.*” In the next section, he tells us, that, of six hundred of their senators, three only remained; and of sixty thousand fighting men, scarcely five hundred. No doubt, this was one of the most tremendous conflicts in the course of his campaigns; but if such facts ever occurred, what must in general have been the vanquished, and what the victors?

In this manner, from indirect notices in the recital of an original author, a more lively idea can often be formed, than from the most regular and professed description. Such a description, however, of the Gauls and Germans is given by Cæsar in the sixth book. Of



the former the picture is short, but striking : — “ Plebs pæne servorum habetur loco, quæ per se nihil audet, et nulli adhibetur concilio. — Viri in uxores, sicuti in liberos, vitæ necisque habent potestatem. — Qui in proeliis periculisque versantur, aut pro victimis homines immolant, aut se immolaturos vovent, administrisque ad ea sacrificia Druidibus utuntur.” A horrible description follows : a wicker figure of a man, immense in size, the interstices of which were to be filled up with living men and then burnt. “ Alii immani magnitudine simulacra habent, quorum contexta viminibus membra vivis hominibus complent, quibus succensis, circumventi flammâ exanimantur homines.” So ingenious is the dullest superstition in contriving its abominable torments. The Druids, indeed, settled the temporal disputes of the community, and gave instructions in astronomy, the doctrine of immortality, &c., — “ Non interire animas ; multa præterea de sideribus ; de rerum naturâ,” &c. But what knowledge of any value could be taught by the priests of so gloomy a superstition ?

So much for the Gauls. With respect to the Germans, they had no Druids. They approached to the state of a pastoral nation ; placed their glory in having a *solitude of terror* around their borders ; had, in peace, no magistrates but their chieftains ; created dictators in war ; and every means was adopted to make the nation hardy and content, by constantly exposing them to the inclemencies of a German climate, and by banishing the distinctions of property and wealth.

Such is a most slight sketch of the assistance which we derive from Cæsar, in our wish to acquire a knowledge of the Barbarians.

We will next advert to Tacitus. More than a hundred years after the Germans had attracted the notice of Cæsar, they were delineated by the masterly pencil of Tacitus, and that in a professed work on the subject, — “ De Moribus Germaniæ.”

The figures are still bold and savage, but something of a more soft and agreeable light is diffused, however faintly, over the picture. In our estimation of the whole, some allowance must be made for the great historian himself. We may remember, in our own times, how the eloquent Rousseau, amid the vices of civilized life, could sigh for the innocence and the virtue — “ the sublime science of simple souls ” — which he conceived could be found only amid the rocks and the forests of uncultivated man. The sensibility of Tacitus, — a man of imagination also, — exasperated by the licentiousness of Rome, may be suspected, in like manner, of having surveyed these unpolished Barbarians with considerable indulgence. The manly virtues were undoubtedly to be found among them ; but, to the perfection of the human character, it is necessary that these should be softened by humanity and dignified by knowledge.

I stop to observe, that savage and civilized life may each exhibit the disgusting extremes of opposite evil ; but the one uniformly, the other only partially. It is in vain to fly from one, to be lost in the still more frightful degradation of the other ; and the propensities and capacities of our nature seem clearly to indicate that we are intended, not for solitude and torpor, but for society and improvement.

Whatever value we may justly affix to the account of Cæsar, the treatise of Tacitus is still more distinct, complete, and important. There is no work of profane literature that has been so studied and discussed. The whole has such a reference to the manners and governments of Europe, that every part of it has been examined by antiquarians and philosophers ; and there is no labor which we must not willingly employ, if it be necessary, to familiarize our minds to a treatise so celebrated and so important. I must suppose this done, and proceed. When we have thus formed a general idea of the Barbarians, we must next endeavour to understand the character and situation of the Romans.

The original classic writers of Rome must be consulted ; but they must be *meditated*, not *read* ; the student has probably read most of them already. But with respect to all the classical writings of antiquity, I must digress for a moment to observe, that it is one thing to know their beauties and their difficult passages, and *another*, to turn to our own advantage the information they contain. It is one thing to enrich our imagination and form our taste ; it is another, to draw from them the materials of our own reasonings, to enlarge our knowledge of human nature, and to give efficacy to our own labors, by observing the images of the human mind, as reflected in the mirrors of the past. He who is already a scholar should endeavour to be more ; it is possible that he may be possessed of treasures which he is without the wish or the ability to use. And here I would recommend to my hearers one of the essays of Mr. Hume, — that on the Populousness of Ancient Nations ; this essay will illustrate my meaning. My hearers may probably never have heard of Mr. Hume as a man of learning ; but this essay may serve to show the difference between what a man of learning often is, and what he sometimes, as in the case of Mr. Hume, may become, — between him who merely reads, and him who not only reads, but thinks, — who can acquire not only a knowledge of words and sentences (investigations in themselves of perfect importance), but can carry his knowledge into investigations of a still higher nature, the study of the principles of human nature and political society. The same essay may also illustrate the art which I have already announced, of drawing from a work inferences which the author never intended to supply. Of this art no master has ever yet appeared, equal to Mr. Hume.

But to return to our more immediate subject, the characters of the



Barbarians and Romans. — After such writers as I have mentioned or alluded to, the first three chapters of Mr. Gibbon's History, and the ninth, must be most diligently studied. These chapters may serve to point out more particularly the classical authors that should be consulted; — they are very comprehensively and powerfully written; nothing more can be wanted to give the most lively and complete idea of the Romans and the Barbarians, and to enable us to understand and sympathize with the great contest that was to ensue. I must again suppose this done; and the student, having thus acquainted himself with the state of the barbarous and civilized nations of Europe, at this remarkable epoch, may be next employed in considering our second question, — Which of the two descriptions of combatants was likely to prevail? — what were the natural and acquired advantages and disadvantages of each?

When we read the account of the hardiness and fierce courage of the Barbarians, it seems impossible that they should be, by any other human beings, resisted; and yet still more impossible to suppose that the Roman legions can be overcome, when we consider, on the other hand, their skill, their courage, and their discipline, — the long result of many ages of experience and victory. Arms, science, and union are on one side; savage nature and freedom on the other. The ultimate success, however, of the Barbarians could not well be doubted; every change, it was clear, would be in their favor; it was the contest of youth against age, of hope against fear.

In the civilized state, the government had degenerated into a military despotism; the vital principle was in decay; the freedom, the genius, of Rome was gone for ever. Discipline, it was evident, would in the Barbarians continually improve, — among the Romans gradually disappear. The jealousies and dissensions of the Barbarians, on one side, might delay the event; as might, on the other, great ability and virtue in the Roman emperors. But a succession of such merit could not be expected. Under the military government of the army, — a government of anarchy and licentiousness, — the character of the Roman people, and of the army itself, would eventually sink and perish; and a few Barbarian chieftains arising at different periods, of sufficient ability to combine and direct the energies of their countrymen, would, it was evident, at first shake and at length overwhelm the licentious affluence, the relaxed discipline, the broken, the wasted, the distracted powers of the Empire of Rome. Such, indeed, was the fact. The particular events and steps of this great revolution are to be seen in the History of Gibbon. There is likewise a history of the Germans, written originally in German by Mascou, and an English translation by Lediard, where the facts are told more simply and intelligibly; and to the learning and merit of this author Mr. Gibbon bears ample testimony.

The fall of the Empire of the West was evidently to be expected,



for the reasons we have mentioned ; but to these might have been added, by any reasoner at the time, the possibility that a new torrent of Barbarians might rush into Europe from the northeast and the plains of Scythia. The Empire had never been undisturbed, and had often suffered very severe defeats, in that quarter. Such a calamity might not prove fatal, though dreadful, even to the Germans ; but there was every probability that it would complete the destruction of Rome. Such an irruption did, in fact, take place ; the nation of the Huns suddenly appeared, savages still more odious and terrific than had before been experienced. From the north of China they had passed or retreated to the confines of the Volga,—thence to the Tanais, — and after they had defeated the Alani, they pressed onward to the conquest of Europe. The Goths themselves, on whom they first descended, considered them as the offspring of witches and infernal spirits in the deserts of Scythia ; an opinion that forcibly expressed how unsightly was their appearance and how tremendous their hostility.

An account of this invasion, and of the nation itself, may be read in the twenty-sixth, thirty-fourth, and thirty-fifth chapters of Mr. Gibbon ; and notwithstanding the range of knowledge displayed, and the masterly compression of the subject, the reader will often be reminded, but too painfully, of the simplicity of Hume, and the perspicuous, though somewhat labored, elegance of Robertson.

This dreadful visitation of the Huns did not, after all, destroy the Roman Empire, or leave that impression on the face of Europe which might have been expected. When the fierce Attila was no more, the force of his nation gradually decayed : Attila himself retreated from Gaul, which in the progress of his conquests he had attacked ; and this whole irruption of the Huns must be considered chiefly as a sort of temporary interruption to the great contest between the northern nations and Rome. To this contest our attention must again return, and we must pursue the fall of the Western Empire, as shown in the stately and brilliant narrative of Gibbon. The northern nations we shall now see everywhere triumphant ; distinct divisions of them taking their station, — the Franks in Gaul, the Visigoths in Spain, the Burgundians on the Rhone, the Austro-Goths in Italy ; and the Western Empire, at last, sinking under the great leader of his nation, Odoacer, who was himself subdued by the renowned Theodoric.

And now a second epoch is presented to us, — the fall of the Western Empire of Rome and the rise of the different empires of the Barbarians ; and, therefore, now comes the third and the last question which we have mentioned, — What was to be the result of this tremendous collision between the civilized and uncivilized portions of mankind, and of this ultimate triumph of the Barbarians ?

Could we suppose a philosopher to have lived at this period of the

world, elevated by benevolence and enlightened by learning and reflection, concerned for the happiness of mankind and capable of comprehending it, we can conceive nothing more interesting than would to him have appeared the situation and fortunes of the human race. The civilized world, he would have said, is sinking in the west before these endless tribes of savages from the north. The sister empire of Constantinople in the east, the last remaining refuge of civilization, must soon be overwhelmed by similar irruptions of Barbarians from the northwest, from Scythia, or the remoter east. What can be the consequence? Will the world be lost in the darkness of ignorance and ferocity, — sink, never to emerge? Or will the wrecks of literature and the arts, that may survive the storm, be fitted to strike the attention of these rude conquerors, or sufficient to enrich their minds with the seeds of future improvement? Or, lastly, and on the other hand, may not this extended and dreadful convulsion of Europe be, after all, favorable to the human race? Some change is necessary; the civilized world is no longer to be respected; its manners are corrupted, its literature has long declined, its religion is lost in controversy or debased by superstition. There is no genius, no liberty, no virtue. Surely the human race will be improved by the renewal which it will receive from the influx of these freeborn warriors. Mankind, fresh from the hand of nature, and regenerated by this new infusion of youth and vigor, will no longer exhibit the vices and the weakness of this decrepitude of humanity; their aspect will be erect, their step firm, their character manly. There are not wanting the means to advance them to perfection: the Roman law is at hand to connect them with each other; Christianity, to unite them to their Creator; they are already free. The world will, indeed, begin anew, but it will start to a race of happiness and glory.

Such, we may conceive, *might* have been the opposite speculations of any enlightened reasoner at that critical period. But with what eagerness would he have wished to penetrate into futurity! How would he have sighed to lift up that awful veil which no hand can remove, no eye can pierce! With what intensity of curiosity would he have longed to gaze upon the scenes that were in reality to approach! And could such an anticipation of the subsequent history of the world have been indeed allowed him, with what variety of emotions would he have surveyed the strange and shifting drama that was afterwards exhibited by the conflicting reason and passions of mankind, — the licentious warrior, the gloomy monk, the military prophet, the priestly despot, the shuddering devotee, the iron baron, the ready vassal, the courteous knight, the princely merchant, the fearless navigator, the patient scholar, the munificent patron, the bold reformer, the relentless bigot, the consuming martyr, the poet, the artist, and the philosopher, the legislator, the statesman, and the sage, *all* that were by their united virtues and labors to assist the



progress of the human race, *all* that were at last to advance society to the state which, during the greater part of the last century, it so happily had reached, the state of balanced power, of diffused humanity and knowledge, of political dignity, of private and public happiness!

There are periods in the history of mankind, when wishes like these, to look into futurity, — strange and unmeaning as to colder minds they may at first sight appear, vain as to minds the most ardent and enlightened we must confess them to be, — are still natural and inevitable; and are felt, and deeply felt, by all intelligent men, to the very fatigue and sickening of curiosity. Such a period has been our own; it continued to be so for more than twenty years, from the breaking out of the French Revolution in 1789. Such a period was found in the days of Columbus, and of Luther. Such, lastly, was the period which we are, in this lecture, more immediately considering, the period when the northern nations were everywhere prevailing; and the question was, What were to be the future fortunes of the world? — to what changes were to be exposed the knowledge and civilization of the human race?

I must recommend it to you to take every opportunity to pause in this manner, and to indulge any effort of the imagination by which you can suppose yourselves for a time transported into distant ages, taking part with the actors in the scene, animated with their hopes, alarmed by their fears, oppressed by their anxieties, their apprehensions for the future, their regrets for the past. For it is only by this plastic power of the mind, and these voluntary delusions, that either the instruction or the entertainment of history can be realized, — that history can be thoroughly understood, or properly enjoyed.

We return, then, to that memorable epoch in the history of Europe to which I have endeavoured to direct your reflections. The Barbarians have everywhere broken down the Roman empire, and have established their own; they have taken their different stations. What, then, was the result? To what degree, on the one hand, was the independent ferocity of the Barbarians softened by that Christianity and those laws which were at the time in the possession of the Romans; and to what degree, on the other, was the degeneracy of the Romans elevated? What purity did their controversial religion, what freedom did their courtly jurisprudence, derive from the bold and native virtues of the Barbarians? In a word, what were the fortunes of the human race? What impression, what direction, did the happiness of mankind receive?

The answer to these questions is not at first as favorable as might be wished; it is for some time contained in the history of the Dark Ages. The Dark Ages were the more immediate result of this memorable crisis of the western world. And it is thus that the Dark



Ages are almost the first subject that is to be encountered by the student of modern history.

This is unfortunate, — unfortunate more especially for the youthful student. Look at the writers that undertake the history of these times. They oppress you by their tediousness; they repel you by their very appearance, by the antiquarian nature of their researches, and the very size of their volumes. You recoil, and very naturally, from events and names which you have never heard of before, which you do not expect to hear of again, and which, above all, it is impossible to remember.

Were you to fly to the General History of Voltaire, you might be able to read, indeed, the page, from the occasional sprightliness of the remarks; but you would not be able to understand the events and characters which you would there see pass before your eyes, in a succession far too shadowy and rapid; nor would you be able, more than before, to remember what you had read. The only benefit that you would appear to derive would be this, — that you would think you had learnt from the perusal, that, though you remembered nothing, there was nothing worth remembering; that savages, under whatever name, were fitted only to disgust you; and that you had better hasten to parts of history more authentic and more instructive. The same conclusion you would see drawn by Lord Bolingbroke, in his Letters on History.

Conclusions, however, like these are not the proper conclusions. The history of the Dark Ages, for all philosophic purposes, is neither without its authenticity nor its value, and you must, in some way or other, acquire some knowledge of it, — some knowledge of these barbarous times, and these our barbarous ancestors; because you must, by some means or other, see the manner in which the European character was formed, and from what elements the different governments of Europe have originally sprung.

The European character, you must be aware, is not the Asiatic character, nor the native American character, but one singularly composed, and one that has been able to subjugate every other in the world. Nor is the European form of government like the Asiatic, nor is that of England like that of France, nor either like that of Germany; and it is these differences and their origin — these differences, both in the personal character of the individual of Europe, and in the general character of the constitution under which he lives — that are the first objects which present themselves to your diligence; and to trace them out and to understand them must constitute your entertainment and support your diligence, while you are laboring through the history of the Dark Ages.

I do not deny that the study of this particular part of modern history is difficult and tedious. In whatever way I can propose it to you, this must necessarily be the case. Those whose minds are of a

philosophic cast may, indeed, undertake it with cheerfulness, and be left to pursue it with pleasure and success; but it is for me to endeavour to accommodate myself to minds of every description; and I shall therefore mention, in the first place, what I think may be attempted by any one who hears me, however indisposed to antiquarian research.

In the first place, then, there has been a book published by Mr. Butler that on the present occasion I consider as invaluable, — Butler on the German Constitution. Here will be found all the outlines of the subject. Let the detail be studied, whenever it is thought necessary, in Gibbon. Let Hénault's Abridgment, or Millot's Abridgment, or rather Elements, of the French History, be referred to. These may be followed by Robertson's introduction to his History of Charles the Fifth. And in this manner the student will be conducted through a long and dreary tract (which, however, it is entirely necessary he should travel through) with the least possible expense, as I conceive, of his time and his patience.

In the lecture of to-morrow, I may allude to more books, and recommend more, than I have yet done; but, in the first place, I have thought it best to describe, in the manner you have heard, the least possible effort that can be required from any one that is placed within the reach of a regular education in an improved country, like this of England. No good can be purchased without some labor; and though the opening of modern history may be repulsive, the portions of it that follow will be found sufficiently attractive.

You will now, therefore, understand what I wish you to bear away, as the sum and substance of the present lecture: — That it was a very remarkable crisis of the world, when the Romans and Barbarians were contending for the empire of it. That you must endeavour to comprehend from the writers I first mentioned, Cæsar, Tacitus, and Gibbon, what were the characters of the combatants, and then ask yourselves what was likely to be the result. That the first and more immediate result was the Dark Ages. That these are, therefore, immediately to be studied; not only as being the first result of such an extraordinary collision between the civilized and uncivilized portions of mankind at the time, but because in these Dark Ages are to be found the elements of the European character and governments, as they now exist. Studied, however, though they must be, that studied they cannot be without great toil and patience. That to those who are ready to undergo such intellectual exertion I shall address myself in subsequent lectures, but that in the mean time the readiest method I have to propose of acquiring proper information on this indispensable portion of modern history is the study of Butler, Gibbon, Hénault, or Millot, and Robertson, — his preface to the History of Charles the Fifth; and that this course of reading I think very practicable.



One word more, and I conclude. You have just heard the books I refer to. I have now to add, that I think there are certain subjects which may be selected from the immense general subject of the Dark Ages, and which may give you an idea of the whole in the shortest and best manner. I hope, by mentioning them, to save you from being somewhat bewildered by the variety of topics and the multiplicity of researches in which you might be engaged, if you properly studied even such writers, and no more than such writers, as I have just recommended, — much more, if you passed on from them to others, such as I shall mention to-morrow.

These subjects are the following. You will see them enumerated in the syllabus.

First, in the French history, Clovis, the founder of the French monarchy and the Merovingian or first race of kings.

Second, the Pepins and Charles Martel, the Mayors of the Palace. They administered, and the second Pepin at last seized, the government, and founded the second or Carlovingian race of kings. — And then,

The third object of attention is Charlemagne.

Out of the immense empire of Charlemagne arose the two great empires of Germany and France, which become the fourth point to be considered. Or rather, the point to be considered is the manner in which the crown in the one case became hereditary, in the other elective.

Again, in consequence of the intercourse which took place between the French princes and the Pope, the latter became a temporal prince; which makes the temporal power of the Pope the fifth object of consideration.

During this period the Feudal System had its origin, — the sixth. Chivalry is the seventh.

In the German history, the great objects of attention are the struggles between the Popes and the Emperors, — the eighth.

The rise and prosperity of the free and imperial cities and commercial communities in Italy and every part of Europe, more particularly of the Hanseatic league, — the ninth.

You will thus reach the subject of the Crusades, — the tenth.

These are, I conceive, the main subjects; but there is one yet remaining, which in point of order I should have mentioned first, the laws of the Barbarians, — the eleventh.

You will find this subject alluded to in the books I have mentioned, and you will immediately see its importance. The laws of a people, you cannot but be aware, will always give you the best and readiest insight into their political situation. The laws of the Barbarians will, therefore, best show you what was the more immediate result of the collision we have so often alluded to between the civilized and uncivilized portions of mankind.



This subject, however, is a large subject, and many of you may be unwilling to undertake it. I must endeavour to propose it to you in some way or other that may afford me a proper chance of your considering it, and this I will do to-morrow. It may be as well too, perhaps, if I then enter a little more into the subjects I have just mentioned; and this, therefore, I will do, though I must necessarily be very brief.

I cannot but remember how I have been affected myself by this portion of modern history, in my progress through it as a student, — in other words, and to confess the truth, how disheartened and overpowered I have at times been; and I must now, therefore, remind you of what I have proposed to myself as the great end and hope of these lectures, — the enabling of you to read history with better advantage for yourselves. I shall be too fortunate, if it is possible for me so to assist you in your labors; and so to furnish you with prefatory principles and information, that you may hereafter approach the subject at once as masters and as scholars, — with the curiosity of the one, and the philosophic views of the other.

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## LECTURE II.

### LAWS OF THE BARBARIANS.

IN my last lecture I endeavoured to draw your attention, first, to that crisis of human affairs which took place during the contest of the northern nations with the Romans for the empire of Europe; and, secondly, to the dark ages which immediately followed. I did so, because in that contest, and in those dark ages, not only one of the most interesting epochs may be found in the history of the human race, but also the first outlines and the great original sources and elements of the character of the European individual and of the European governments.

I mentioned to you the books to which you might refer for information; and those subjects which I thought you might select from the rest, as the most likely to give you, in the shortest time, a commanding view of the whole.

I announced to you, as I concluded my lecture, that I should furnish you to-day with a few observations on each of these subjects, the better to enable you to form some general notion of them at present, and to study them hereafter.

This I will now do ; and shall, therefore, have to mention more books than I have hitherto done. The fact is, that I had originally drawn up, with considerable labor, such statements and observations on these subjects, and on the earlier parts of the French and German histories, as I had conceived would give my hearer an adequate view of them, and save him much fatigue of his spirits and occupation of his time. But, after considering what I had written, I became satisfied that I had attempted too much ; that all such subjects and all such periods of history must be left to the study, more or less laborious, of every man for himself ; and that they cannot be discussed or described in any such general manner as can save him from the necessity of his own exertions. Allusions must be made at every moment to characters and events which have been scarcely heard of, and which cannot therefore be understood. Estimates must be given, the propriety of which cannot be judged of ; criticisms entered upon, necessarily unintelligible ; and on the whole, that which it would be a labor to consider, if offered in the shape of a book to a reader in his closet, cannot be presented in the shape of a lecture to a hearer.

I can therefore only mention the exertions I have really made, — the most fatiguing I have had to make, — the better to justify myself in requiring what I esteem but necessary exertions from others ; and I shall sufficiently exercise your patience, if, instead of discussing these subjects, as I had endeavoured to do in several lectures which I have now dismissed, I make an observation on each subject, as I yesterday proposed to do, merely to assist you in taking proper measures for your own instruction.

1st, then, an account of Clovis and the earlier portions of the French history is to be found in Gibbon.

2d. With respect to the Mayors of the Palace. The observations of Montesquieu are here very satisfactory. But in all and in every part of these subjects, and of all this history, the work of the Abbé de Mably is inestimable. The French history, to one not a native of France, would be a subject of despair, would be totally unintelligible, without his assistance ; and when I recommend him to others, I ought to do it in the language of the most perfect gratitude for the relief he has so often, or rather, so continually, afforded me.

3d. With respect to Charlemagne, the great conqueror of his age. There is a life by Eginhard, who lived in his family ; and as it is very concise and intelligible, more especially as it is an original document, it is well worthy of your perusal. But it is too much in the nature of an *éloge*, — nothing is criticized, nothing censured. The reader must think for himself. Eginhard never speculates or enters into the causes of events, or their consequences. Thus, he mentions the great defeat of the Mahometans in the plains of France, by Charles Martel, and the elevation of Pepin to the throne, “*per auctoritatem Romani Pontificis*,” without the slightest comment.

Eginhard gives a few, but too few, of the particulars of the private life and manners of the emperor ; — that he in vain endeavoured, when too late, to learn to write, &c., &c.

Montesquieu is loud in the praise of this prince. The Abbé de Mably is still more distinct in his approbation. Their approbation is valuable, and should be weighed by the student ; for a less favorable, but masterly, estimate of his merits is given by Mr. Gibbon, in his forty-ninth chapter. His animadversions seem but too just ; yet the estimate, on the whole, is not sufficiently indulgent. In judging of Charlemagne, the student will no doubt recollect the nature of all genius and all merit, that it is relative to the age in which it appears.

So much for the third subject I mentioned, — the subject of Charlemagne.

4th. After the decease of Charlemagne, his immense empire fell into the great divisions of Italy, France, and Germany.

And now the point which should attract, I think, your attention, is the manner in which the crown in France became hereditary, but in Germany elective, and the consequences of these two different events. There are some conclusions that may be drawn from the nature of man so clearly, that they may be extended to politics, and even formed into maxims, — for example, that hereditary is preferable to elective monarchy. The objections to elective monarchy have always been verified in the history of mankind. A thousand years ago, it might have been foretold, that, if in France the crown became hereditary, and in Germany elective, the one kingdom would be compact and powerful, the other comparatively divided and weak ; that, from their vicinity, these empires would subsist in a state of mutual jealousy ; and that, in all contests with its great neighbour, Germany would, from its constitution, lose all its natural strength ; that, as the crown was elective, and as the great lords had fallen into a few exclusive combinations, the event must be, either that one of these dynasties would gain the ascendant and reduce the whole into something like an hereditary empire, or, if not strong enough to seize the whole power, then that some secondary potentate might always be able to unite itself with France, and embroil and weaken, if not ultimately destroy, the whole. It might also have been stated as a general maxim, that the evils attendant on an elective monarchy would be lessened, the more completely the election was transferred from the general assemblies of the kingdom to a few electors, as representatives of the whole kingdom. All these points might have been stated long before the different fortunes of Germany and Poland had become examples in history ; and though it be very difficult, as I must repeat, to reduce politics to a science, yet there seem some principles in human nature so steady, that a few maxims may be formed universally applicable.

The origin of this important difference in the constitutions of France



and Germany should be considered. You will therefore, do well to observe, in the work of Pffefel, at the end of each reign and of each dynasty, how the custom of election was preserved in the German Empire, till the right received its formal establishment in the electoral college, by the golden bull of Charles the Fourth ; how chance and circumstances contributed to this remarkable difference between the two kingdoms. This latter part of the subject may be still more completely seen in the Abbé de Mably, particularly in the sixth chapter of the fourth book. The French history, too, must be read with this particular point present to your remembrance, — *how*, for instance, in France the crown became hereditary.

5th. With respect to the fifth point, the rise of the temporal power of the Pope, there is a very clear and concise account given by Mr. Butler, to which I refer. Koch, too, is very satisfactory, though concise. The Church of Rome seems originally to have derived its property and its magistracy from Constantine. Pepin successfully applied to the Pope to sanction his unjust seizure of the crown, and the see of Rome was, in return, complimented afterwards with the grant of the exarchate of Ravenna and the Pentapolis. The intercourse between Charlemagne and Pope Adrian was of a similar nature, and very beneficial to the see. Pepin might little conceive, when he applied to the Pope for the sanction of his opinion and authority, to what extent the sort of interference he requested would be afterwards carried ; and it is by these transactions between the kings of France and the Popes that this period of history is for ever rendered memorable to the nations of Europe. What immediately gave rise to this power of the Pope, for which the world was so prepared, was the controversy about the worship of images ; a masterly account of the whole subject, including the commencement of this temporal authority, will be found in Mr. Gibbon's forty-ninth chapter. The reflection of the reader may justly be drawn, not only to the origin of the temporal power of the Pope, but to the controversy itself, — the controversy about images, so illustrative of the character of mankind, ever ready to lose the practice of religion in contests about its speculative points or ceremonial observances.

6th. The next subject, the Feudal System, is one on which the student may exhaust his time and exercise his diligence to any extent he pleases ; it has employed the penetration and industry of innumerable antiquarians, philosophers, and lawyers, in whose inquiries and dissertations he may, if he pleases, for ever wander. With respect, however, to the origin and leading features of this memorable institution, his attention may, perhaps, be confined to the observations of Montesquieu, the Abbé de Mably, Robertson, Stuart in his *View of Society in Europe*, and Millar. In Montesquieu he may, perhaps, be somewhat disappointed. Great learning and great power of remark are displayed, but the whole is perplexing and unsatisfac

tory, and therefore very fatiguing: the inquiry does not proceed from step to step, and then arrive at a conclusion; remark follows remark, and one dissertation is succeeded by another, of which it is not easy to see the connection; the parts are not combined into a whole by the author himself, nor can they be by his reader. It is not so with Millar, Robertson, or Stuart, or the Abbé de Mably; these authors are at once concise, unaffected, and intelligible.

The institution of the feudal system must be traced, if possible, through such ancient records as have come down to us; and the student, by reading the authors just mentioned, and looking at the references they make to the Capitularies and state papers which appear in Baluze, if he has not the greater work of the Benedictines near him, "Recueil des Historiens des Gaules et de la France," may sufficiently understand the nature of this important subject. The institution itself, though destined so materially to affect the form and happiness of society, grew up insensibly, and its steps and gradations cannot now be marked. Upon consulting the books I have recommended, it will appear, in the first place, that the notion of the feudal system which is generally formed is not accurate. It does not seem to have been, as is supposed, a system adopted by the northern nations merely for the sake of preserving their conquests; even Dr. Robertson himself, in his earlier consideration of this subject, seems to have too nearly approached to some such mistake as this. It will be found that lands were held originally by each soldier as his own, allodial, — his share of the spoil, on the first conquest of a country. In the next place, lands were held as *beneficia*, — lands given by the king or leader. But a fief is more than all this; it is lands held on a condition of military or other service, on a condition of vassalage to some superior lord. The Abbé de Mably makes it sufficiently probable that *beneficia* of this kind — that is, that fiefs — were first introduced by Charles Martel.

The authors I have referred to explain sufficiently the progress of this system: how the fiefs became at last hereditary; how the system of rear fief and rear vassal, of fief within fief, at last obtained; how the same general system, with various distinctions, was extended to ecclesiastical property; how, at last, all the property was converted (allodial as well as beneficial), upon the regular principles of human nature, into feudal property; how kingdoms fell into a few great fiefs, of which the monarch himself became at last the great holder, and therefore the great feudal lord, with more or less influence and authority, according to the fortune or talents of his ancestors and himself. Thus, in the course of two centuries, the fiefs, for instance, in France, had become hereditary, the whole kingdom had fallen into eight or nine great feudal baronies; of these Hugh Capet held the strongest, and being the first in ability, amongst these feudal chiefs, as well as in possessions, he usurped the crown, and transmitted it to his posterity.



Stuart produces his reasons for insisting upon his great distinction in the history of the feudal association, — namely, that it was originally a bond of love, amity, and friendship, — not of oppression, its second and degraded period. This must be considered. But how soon and how completely it degenerated may be seen from turning to what were called the feudal incidents, which may be found in Blackstone, in the notes to Stuart, and in the second of the appendixes of Hume's History. The advantages and disadvantages of this system may be collected, not only from the writers I have mentioned, but from Dr. Millar, who considers it as a system necessarily arising from the nature and manners of these northern nations, — tribes of independent warriors, put into possession, by their conquests, of extensive tracts of country, inhabited by a more civilized people. And, on the whole, however natural might be the rise and subsequent establishment of the system, and whatever might have been the benefits which it might have afforded to society during *some* of its earlier periods, a consideration of the incidents which I have mentioned will show clearly that it must soon have become one of the greatest political evils that a community could have to struggle with. No doubt, the state of anarchy from which the feudal system saved society must be duly considered. Whatever was fitted, as was the feudal system, to bind men together by any sense of protection, of gratitude, of fidelity, of reciprocal obligation, — whatever was likely to create or uphold any generous feelings or milder virtues among them, — whatever had a tendency to protect Europe from any one great conqueror, — whatever introduced or maintained among men any notion of legal or political right, was during a long interval (such was then the unhappy state of the world) of the greatest consequence to the world. But when this office had been rendered to mankind, the feudal system became in its turn a source of the most incessant, vexatious, unfeeling, and atrocious oppression, and a great impediment to all prosperity and improvement. These two different situations of the system and of the world must be kept distinctly in remembrance.

7th. The subject of Chivalry may be found in the work of Stuart, and there is a short notice of it in the fifty-eighth chapter of Gibbon. The Memoirs of Ancient Chivalry, by Monsieur de St. Palaye, is the book generally referred to, and it must by all means be considered; but it is a work very defective. It contains, indeed, a sufficient discussion of the education, character, and exercises of the knights, but there is not united with these, as there should have been, any philosophic account of the rise, influence, and decline of chivalry. These important topics are, indeed, taken up and laid down several times in different parts of the work, but never pursued or discussed in any steady and effective manner. I am not aware that this has been properly done or regularly attempted by any writer; which,



considering the present advanced state of literature, is somewhat remarkable. The work of Palaye may be found, where it first appeared, in the "*Mémoires de l'Académie*," twentieth volume.

8th. In the German history, to which we next allude, and indeed in the history of every part of Europe at this period, the striking object of attention is the growth and immense strength of ecclesiastical power. The annals of England, France, and more especially of Germany, are abundantly crowded with instances of the kind. We must recollect that the different prerogatives of the Emperor and Pope were left in a state very vague and unsettled. The events of the contest are seen in Pfeffel, in that part of his History which we now approach, the dynasties of the different houses of Saxony, Franconia, and Suabia. It is the earlier part of a struggle of this kind that is most interesting to a philosophic observer. It is then that the lessons of instruction are given; it is then that are seen the slow and successive encroachments by which tyranny is at last established, — the gradual accessions of shade by which a picture is at last lost in darkness, — the awful example which proves that what is experiment to-day is precedent to-morrow, and right and law, however unjust and abominable, for succeeding generations. The steps by which the power of the Pope became a despotism so complete are marked with sufficient minuteness by Giannone, in his ecclesiastical chapters, particularly in his fifth chapter of his nineteenth book; and this will be sufficient for the information of the student. Mr. Gibbon has made several valuable observations on the different emperors of the different dynasties during this period, and on their contests in Italy. The remarks of Pfeffel are particularly to be noted in the Great Interregnum. This is the period during which the prerogatives of the states and the great public law of Germany gained a strength and assumed a form which they never afterwards lost.

9th. In Pfeffel, too, may be examined the next great object of remark which I have mentioned: that change, of all one of the most important, the improvement which took place in the condition of the imperial cities and the free and imperial cities about this time. As it is instructive to investigate the progress of the abuse of power, so is it, to note the progress of human prosperity, often from beginnings the most unpromising. The important step in this progress was the enfranchisement that had been obtained by the inhabitants of these cities from the German emperor Henry the Fifth, about a century and a half before this period. They had not, however, been admitted into the offices of the magistracy; this, after the death of Frederic the Second, in some way or other they effected, and at last became a part of the general constitution of Germany itself. However distant were these towns or little republics from each other, the sympathy of a common interest was everywhere felt. Their councils always harmonized, their enterprises were the same; and

the league of the Rhine and the Hanseatic league taught a world of barbarous priests and warriors to enjoy the industry and respect the courage of these new princes and potentates, the offspring, indeed, of serfs and peddlers, but the civilizers and benefactors of mankind. In 1241, Lübeck united itself with a few neighbouring towns against some pirates of the Baltic. Their success gave rise to a union of all the commercial cities from the Vistula to the Rhine. Among these, the cities of Lübeck, Cologne, Brunswick, and Dantzic, particularly Lübeck, had the direction of the general interests. London, Bergen, Novgorod, and Bruges were the great dépôts: these connected the north to the rest of Europe; Augsburg and Nuremberg, in the heart of Germany, connected the north to Italy; and the Italian republics maintained the intercourse between the western and eastern divisions of mankind. Thus extensively did the Hanseatic league circulate the gifts of nature and the labors of art for nearly three centuries, and it at length declined, only because it had discharged its salutary office in the progress of society, and because it was superseded, on the discovery of the Indies, by that more natural and more complete, though still but too imperfect, system of commercial intercourse, which, in defiance of all the jealousies or ignorance and all the interruptions and destruction of war, has so long continued to soften, to animate, and to improve the condition of humanity.

10th. The memorable Crusades are amongst the objects that will in the next place present themselves to the student. They have been fully explained by Hume and other writers; but, as they have called forth all the powers of the historian of the Decline and Fall, the student may have the advantage of his animated and comprehensive narrative, and, more particularly, may observe, in one of his notes, the original authorities on which his relation and remarks are founded. He is not only the last writer on these subjects, but one who is not likely to leave much to be gleaned by those who come after him.

In this slight manner I have endeavoured to mention, not to discuss, the great points of attention during these Middle Ages. I cannot deny that the perusal of this part of history is very fatiguing, but there is no part more important; it must at all events be considered. I hope that I have presented it in a form in which it may be considered. It is only from a due meditation on these melancholy scenes and on human nature in this unfortunate situation, that the student can ever be taught properly to feel those blessings of civil, religious, and commercial liberty by which the later periods of the world have been in comparison so happily distinguished.

I must now refer to the last remaining subject among those which I enumerated, as connected with this period of the history of the world.



You may remember that in yesterday's lecture I mentioned the Barbaric Codes. The institutions and laws to which these northern nations conformed existed long before they were reduced into form and writing; but this was at last done. They were enlarged, amended, and altered by different princes. Some general knowledge of them must be obtained.

There are observations by Mr. Gibbon on these laws; there are some chapters in Montesquieu. It might be thought sufficient to refer to the remarks of these great writers; but on this, as on all other occasions, some labor must be endured; the reader would receive from them a very general and imperfect impression, and that impression would soon pass away. The Codes themselves must be, at least in part, perused; but, before this is attempted, we should refer to the History of Gibbon, and afterwards to Hénault's Abridgment of the History of France, so as to become somewhat acquainted with the names and characters of the princes mentioned in these codes, in the prefaces to them, and in the Capitularies that follow them; and should then, and not before, begin our survey of the volumes in which these Barbaric laws and institutions are contained. They are published by Lindenbrogius; his work is easily met with. The work of Baluze contains the Capitularies; this work, too, can be everywhere found.

The *Capitularies* were the laws or proclamations of different princes in succession, from Clovis to Hugh Capet; and these, with the Codes, indicate the character of the nations and governments to which they belong, from the earliest time. Now it is impossible for me to attempt any examination of these systems of law in this course of lectures, or for any one in any course of lectures, unless they were given for that precise purpose; but I had hoped, I must confess, that some of the leading laws of each code might be exhibited by me, so as to give some general idea of the whole. After spending, however, many hours on the work of Lindenbruch, and drawing up a detail, with such observations as I had conceived would enable my hearer to carry away the leading points of each code, and the differences by which they were distinguished from one another, I found, upon a revisal of what I had done, that the whole was a mass too unwieldy to be here produced, even though drawn up in the most summary way, and that, at all events, the subject must be treated in some other manner. Upon looking, too, at these immense volumes, it was but too evident that a very small portion of them could ever be read by the historical student; yet it is perfectly necessary that some idea should be formed of them, or the history of Europe and the character of its inhabitants cannot be properly understood.

What I propose, therefore, to the student is this: to select from the rest the Salique Code, and, as it is short, I recommend it to be read through entirely. It is impossible, from the perusal of it, that a



strong impression should not be left on the mind of the nature and character of our Barbaric ancestors. And with respect to the other codes, it appears to me that a very sufficient idea of these may be formed, if the student will turn over the leaves of these codes and examine them with respect to the following points: — 1st, By whom the laws were made; 2d, What were their criminal punishments; 3d, What were the laws respecting the recovery of debts; 4th, What respecting the transmission of property; 5th, What with respect to the female sex; 6th, What with respect to the liberty of the subject, — the laws of treason, for instance; 7th, By whom the laws were administered.

I consider an inquiry into the Barbaric codes so tedious, and yet so important, that, to illustrate my meaning, and to make some attempt at least of my own with respect to them, I will venture to trespass a little upon my hearers' patience, and take a survey of the Salique code, for instance, in the manner which I conceive the student may himself adopt with respect to the remaining codes. Thus, —

1st. By whom was this Salique code drawn up and enacted? — The answer to this inquiry may be found in the prefaces, which are on the whole curious and striking. The nation, in this preface to the Salique code, seems to speak for itself, and to be animated, like other nations, with a very sincere opinion of its own merits. It is renowned, it seems, founded by the Deity, profound in counsel, with every other noble and excellent quality; and it is added, in a manner that must be considered as characteristic of the times, that "it is entirely free from heresy." For this nation, then, the Salique code seems to have been drawn up at an early period, and before the existence of royalty among them, "*per procures illius gentis, qui tunc temporis ejusdem aderant rectores.*" Four chiefs, and four villages,\* their residence, are mentioned. The law seems afterwards to have been improved by Clovis, Childebert, and Clotaire. This is stated; and then follows a state-prayer which is more than usually modest: — "*Vivat qui Francos diligit, Christus eorum regnum custodiat,*" &c.; and the whole concludes with a statement of the merits, civil and theological, of the nation: they appear, indeed, to have been considerable: — "*Hæc est enim gens, quæ parva dum esset numero, fortis robore et valida, durissimum Romanorum jugum de suis cervicibus excussit pugnando,*" &c. The whole must be considered as breathing a very bold spirit of national liberty, and the authority on which the whole was rested seems to have been that of the nation and its rulers, mutually coöperating for the common good. The legislature seems afterwards to have been the monarchs and their free assemblies. — So much for the first question, By whom the laws were made.

\* In the *Preface* to the Salique Code, here quoted, four chiefs, but only *three* villages, are mentioned: — "*Wisogastus, Bodogastus, Salogastus, et Widogastus, in locis cognominatis Salehaim, Bodohaim, Widohaim.*" It might be conjectured that in this enumeration of villages there was an accidental omission of one name, were it not that the same enumeration is found also in the *Prologue*: and again, with slight variations in the form of the names, in the *Prolegomena* of Lindenbrogius. So also in the other editions of this Code which have been consulted. — N.

2d. What were the criminal punishments of the Salique code? — Homicide was not capital; a striking fact to begin with, indicating a very different state of society from our own. The words of the law are these (p. 333): — “Si quis ingenuus Francum aut hominem barbarum occiderit, qui lege Salicâ vivit, octo denariis, qui faciunt solidos ducentos, culpabilis judicetur.” But in the next law the penalty is tripled in case of concealment. These Barbarians, therefore, could distinguish the nature of different crimes; and the first law is only made more worthy of consideration by the second. The conclusion from the whole is, that each individual of the nation was still an independent being, who would not suffer his life to be affected by any crime which he committed; who would not submit to restraint; who neither saw, nor would have regarded, the benefit that is derived to all by the submission of each man to rules calculated to maintain the security of life and to protect the weak. And this single feature gives at once an idea of the bold character of our early ancestors, of the fierceness of these independent warriors. Other crimes — those of theft, for instance — are in like manner punished by fines. But the cases are all mentioned, — different animals, for instance, hogs, sheep, goats, &c. There is commonly no general description. Now when legislators make laws against particular thefts by name, the intercourse of mankind must still be very simple. The distinctions of crimes were everywhere observed. To steal from a cottage, to the value of a denarius, was punished by a fine of fifteen solidi; and thirty, if the cottage was broken open. — So much for the law with respect to criminal punishments.

3d. Next with respect to the third point, — the provisions concerning debts and breach of covenant. — Fine was still in the first place the punishment; and in the fifty-second title (p. 337), a process is pointed out for the forcible recovery of what is due: it is, in the last result, to be levied and distrained by public officers. There is no mention of imprisonment at the mercy and call of the creditor, the indolent resource of more civilized nations.

4th. With respect to the transmission of property. — The power of bequeathing it by testament seems not yet to have been thought of. The law says concerning the allodial land (p. 341), that the children of the deceased were to succeed; next, the father and mother; next, the brothers and sisters; lastly, the sisters of the father, the aunts: \* — “Si quis homo mortuus fuerit, et filios non dimiserit, si pater aut mater superfuerint,” &c., &c. Then follows the famous restriction of the Sal, or homestead and the land immediately around it, to the male, &c.: — “De terrâ vero Salicâ nulla

\* This abstract is imperfect. The law comprises six sections, of which only the first three, and the last, containing “the famous restriction,” cited below, are here given. By the fourth and fifth sections, after the sisters of the father, the sisters of the mother were to succeed; and finally, in default of these, the nearest of kin on the father's side. See Lindenbrogius, *loc. cit.* — N.



portio hereditatis mulieri veniat, sed ad virilem sexum tota terræ hereditas perveniat.” The institution, therefore, of property in land seems now to have been established, though not in the time of Tacitus, — an important step in the civilization of mankind. But there seems nothing said of a power to bequeath it by testament, at the will of the possessor.

5th. Next, with respect to the laws concerning the female sex. — Under the 14th head (p. 320), adultery seems to have been punished by a fine, but there is nothing said of divorce. Marriages within certain limits of consanguinity are forbidden. The conclusion from these provisions is, that attention was paid to the intercourse between the sexes. But from another part of the code the deference that was paid to the female sex is made very striking. Under the 32d head, by the 6th clause, he who accused another of cowardice was to be fined three solidi; but, by the clause preceding, they who accused a woman of want of chastity, and could not prove their allegation, were to be fined forty-five solidi. A false imputation, therefore, on the chastity of a woman was made a crime of far greater importance than even an imputation on the courage of a man, and that man a Frank. The respectability of the female character, therefore, is clear. And there is no point of more importance to any nation than this; domestic happiness, and private virtue, which is so connected with public virtue, all follow as a necessary consequence of the respectability of the female character, and cannot indeed otherwise exist.

6th. With respect to the sixth head, the laws of treason, it may be observed, that of treason, or offences against the state, there seems no notice taken. Every duty of the sort was comprehended in the general duty of resisting or opposing the enemies of the state by personal service. What is meant by civil liberty — the modification of natural liberty, and the relative duties and apprehensions of the ruler and the subject — seems scarcely to have appeared in a society like that of the early Franks.

7th. Lastly, with respect to the administration of these laws. — In the Salique and other codes there are various officers mentioned; superior and inferior judges; witnesses are also mentioned; and markets and public meetings, where justice seems to have been administered.

But it must be observed that the Barbarian codes had always recourse to a system of fines; it seems, therefore, reasonable to ask, What was done, when the offender had no means of paying them? In a simple state of society, a fine must have been a serious punishment; neither capital nor the precious metals could have existed in any abundance. To this question the laws themselves do not supply any answer.

In any particular case of *homicide*, when the offender could not pay, a process is pointed out for satisfaction. In the 61st head, his relations and friends were to answer out of their own possessions;



and, in the last resource, if there were none of them willing, he was to compound with a fine for his life. Nothing is said of imprisonment or corporal punishment, which last was confined to the case of slaves; and the conclusion perhaps is, (for I am left to my own conjecture,) that the strong distinctions of the *poor* and the *rich* had not yet made their appearance, and that the fines were proportioned to the general wealth of the individuals of the community, — that land was still easily procured, and society still in a very imperfect state. Charlemagne, for instance, many years after, transplanted at once ten thousand Saxons and fixed them in his own territories. Much land was, therefore, still waste or loosely occupied. These Barbaric laws were, therefore, I conclude, at first intended to exhibit to contending individuals what might be considered as a reasonable means of terminating their quarrels, — what the one ought to offer, and the other to accept. The words of the prologue to the laws are these: — “*Placuit atque convenit inter Francos et eorum procures, ut propter servandum inter se pacis studium, omnia incrementa veterum rixarum resecare deberent.*” In a rude state of society, individuals involved in their quarrel their relations and friends. These would become, in a certain respect, umpires of the quarrel. These laws afforded them a sort of rule by which they were to judge, and they would be themselves disposed to enforce the observance of these rules and in some respects to do the office of the state. Afterwards, as the kings gained authority, they and their officers would be more able themselves to enforce their own regulations. Efforts to do this, and the power of doing it, are apparent in the subsequent codes. But the disposition to revenge their own affronts and injuries is so natural to men who comprehend every merit in the virtue of personal courage, that centuries elapsed before our rude forefathers could be brought to accept any decision in their quarrels but that of their own swords.

I must observe of this Salique code and of all the other Barbarian codes, that with respect to our first question, the great question in legislation, By whom are the laws made? great dispute exists among antiquarians and philosophers. The power of the kings, and the nature and power of these first assemblies, are subjects of great debate. In this Salique law the form and spirit and authority of the whole seem to have been of a very democratic nature.

In reading all these codes, reference must continually be had to Tacitus. The codes and his account of the Germans mutually confirm and illustrate each other. His description of their assemblies may be compared with this preface to the Salique law, and with the accounts given of the other codes; and on the whole, the system of legislation among these northern nations must be considered as originally of a very popular nature.

I have taken this slight view of the Salique code in the leading points which I mentioned, for the purpose of exemplifying the man-

ner in which I conceive any system of laws may be generally considered, more particularly those of the Barbarian codes which yet remain, and which it is not possible to examine but in some such general way. But I must not omit to observe, that, whenever the laws of a nation can be perused, a variety of conclusions can be drawn from them which the laws themselves never were intended to convey, — conclusions that relate to the manners and situation of a nation, more certain and important than can in any other way be obtained. I will give a specimen of this sort of reasoning, and my hearer must hereafter employ the same sort of reasoning on these codes, and on every system of laws which he ever has an opportunity of considering.

For instance, there is one head that respects petty thefts of different kinds. He who stole a knife was to be fined fifteen solidi; but though he stole as much flax as he could carry, he was fined only three. Iron was, therefore, difficult to procure, or its manufacture not easy. The fertility of the land had done more for these Franks than their own patience or ingenuity; that is, they were barbarians.

Again, he who killed another was only fined; but we are not to suppose that this arose from any superior tenderness of disposition. There is a distinct head in these laws (the 31st) on the subject of mutilations; the very first clause runs thus: — “*Si quis alteri manum aut pedem truncaverit, vel oculum effoderit, aut auriculam vel nasum amputaverit,*” &c., &c. The most horrible excesses evidently took place. Nothing more need be said of the manners or disposition of a people in whose laws such outrages are particularized. That union of tenderness and courage, of sympathy and fortitude, of the softer and severer virtues, which forms the perfection of the human character, is not to be found among savage nations; it is only the occasional and inestimable production of civilized life.

Again, there is mention made of hedges and inclosures; agriculture had, therefore, made some progress.

But among the petty felonies there is one mentioned, — that of ploughing and sowing another man’s land, &c.: — “*Si quis campum alienum araverit et seminaverit,*” &c.: — a strange offence. Where was the owner? Was he too negligent, at too great a distance, or too feeble to take care of his property? Every supposition is unfavorable; and the progress of agriculture and of society must have been still very incomplete. I conceive that there existed among these nations and in these times wandering savages or settlers, as now in the back settlements of America, that are called by the amusing name of “squatters,” — a species of human locusts, that take possession of a piece of land without asking leave of any one, and remain there till they rove away in search of better, or are driven off by the owner.

But to return to the Salique law. — Cars and cart-horses, mills,



and some of the more common occupations of life, as smiths and bakers, are enumerated; some progress must, therefore, have been made. He who killed a Frank was fined two hundred solidi; he who killed a Roman, only one hundred; the Roman was, therefore, in a state of depression. This is the sort of reasoning which my hearers may extend to a variety of particulars, and must already perfectly understand.

In the Salique and other codes, slaves are mentioned, male and female, household servants, freedmen and those who were free from birth, and more descriptions of persons and places and things than can now be well understood. Here lies the province of the antiquarian, who has at least the merit of clearing the way and providing materials for the philosopher, and is thus, mediately or immediately, if possessed of any philosophic discrimination himself, an instructor of mankind.

Such is, I conceive, the manner in which the Salique and the other remaining codes may be examined, and this I must now leave the student to do for himself.

All the other codes will be found very similar in their general nature, but all indicating a more advanced state of society than can be found in the Salique code. The Burgundians, the Lombards, and the Visigoths had been more connected with the Romans, and their laws are, therefore, favorably distinguished from the codes of the more simple and rude Barbarians. To the law of the Burgundians there is a preface worth reading. The preface of Lindenbrogius, which must by all means be read, gives some account of the time and manner in which these codes were promulgated, and to them I refer. In many parts of these codes the reader will perceive the origin of many of the forms and maxims that exist to this moment in the systems of European law.

These Barbarian codes were followed by what are called the Capitularies, a word signifying any composition divided into chapters. These were promulgated by the subsequent monarchs, — by Childebert, Clotaire, Carloman, and Pepin, but above all by Charlemagne; succeeding princes added others. They are to be found in Lindenbrogius; but the best edition of them is by Baluze, in two volumes, folio. To the Codes and to the Capitularies in Lindenbrogius and in Baluze are added the *Formularia* of Marculphus. These *Formularia* are the forms of forensic proceedings and of legal instruments. Marculphus was a monk that seems to have lived so early as 660; so naturally is law connected with precision and form; and so soon, even before 660, was it found necessary to reduce the institutions and legal proceedings of rude barbarians into that sort of technical precision which is so fully exhibited in our modern practice, and which is found so necessary by lawyers, and considered (somewhat thoughtlessly) so unmeaning by others.



All these capitularies and formularies it is not very possible — it may not, indeed, be very useful — for the general student to read; but he may look over the heads and select some few for his perusal. Many of them seem to be of an ecclesiastical nature, and they are interspersed with various state papers; and the influence which religion, and still more the Church, had obtained over these northern conquerors is evident in every page. It appears that extreme unction, confession, and the distinguishing rites of the Romish Church were early established among them; solemn, and, indeed, very affecting church services, for the different trials by ordeal, and for the ceremonies of excommunication. Everywhere there are passages which, when found in legal instruments and public state papers, strongly mark the temper and character of the times. And it is on this account that a philosopher like Montesquieu, from the perusal of musty records like these, can exhibit the manners and opinions of distant ages.

I have thus endeavoured to introduce to your curiosity these Barbaric codes.

It might be natural to ask, What, in the mean time, became of the conquered nation of the Romans? It may be answered, in a general manner, that they seem to have been allowed to live under their own laws, if they did not prefer the laws of the Barbarian state to which they belonged; that their situation seems to have been marked by depression, but not to the extent that might have been expected. But it is impossible for me to enter further into subjects of this nature.

There is a concise work by Mr. Butler, — “*Horæ Juridicæ*”: to this I must refer; it will be of great use in giving you information about the different codes and systems of law that obtained in Europe during these earlier ages, — such information, indeed, as few will be able to collect for themselves, and yet such as every man of education should be furnished with. Gibbon and Montesquieu, through all this period of history, you will refer to. But the Abbé de Mably is the writer who will afford you the best assistance, given neither in the distant, obscure manner of Gibbon, nor with the affectation and paradox of Montesquieu.

More than I have now done on the subject of this lecture I cannot venture to attempt. I have already sufficiently trespassed upon your patience in calling here your attention to topics which are fit only for the student in the closet, and which can be comprehended only by the steady perusal of the very books I am recommending, books which I am to suppose at present unknown to you; and on the whole, therefore, I must content myself, if you bear away from the lecture these following general impressions: —

1st, then (proceeding in a reverse order), That some knowledge should be obtained of the Barbaric codes, and that the Salique law may be taken as a specimen; some knowledge, likewise, of the sys-

tems of law under which the Romans then lived ; and that Butler may be referred to, — his “*Horæ Juridicæ*.”

2dly. That the different subjects I have mentioned, the reigns of Clovis, Pepin, Charlemagne, of chivalry, &c., &c., are those to which you had best direct your attention in the study of the Dark Ages : select them, I mean, and study them in preference to others.

3dly. That these Dark Ages must be studied, because you ought to know what has been the original formation of the character of the European individual, and of the European governments ; how they came to exist, as you everywhere see them.

4thly. That I conceive Butler for the outlines, and Gibbon for the detail, with Hénault or Millot, and, lastly, with the preface to Robertson’s Charles the Fifth, will be sufficient for those who wish only to find the shortest possible course.

5thly. That the Abbé de Mably, and those books I have mentioned to-day, will supply ample information, and all that I can think necessary, to any historical student who is not also ambitious of the merit of an antiquarian.

It is many years since I drew up this lecture which you have just heard. There has now appeared a History of the Middle Ages, by Mr. Hallam. You will there see all the subjects that occupy all the early part of my present course of lectures regularly discussed, and very ably ; I may add, too, wherever the subject admitted of it, very beautifully. I have been obliged, from the known learning and talents of the author, to look the work over, not merely for my own instruction in general, but to ascertain whether I had been misled myself by any of the books on which I had depended. You, in like manner, must refer to the work, and compare it with others ; for the author is not only very able and well informed, but a sufficiently scrupulous critic of the labors of his predecessors. This work may also be recommended to you, as exhibiting for your perusal, in a convenient form, many subjects of great importance, and most of those we have referred to ; and you may see by his references, and may judge by the nature of the subjects themselves, how little you are likely to study them yourselves (I mean you no disrespect, I allude to those of you who are to engage in the business of the world), — to study them, I should say, with that patience and activity which an antiquarian and philosopher, like Mr. Hallam, though himself living in the world and an ornament to society, has so meritoriously and so remarkably displayed.

## LECTURE III.

## MAHOMET.—PROGRESS OF SOCIETY.—GIBBON.

I HAVE hitherto directed your attention to the Romans and Barbarians, their collision, the fall of the Western Empire, the settlement of the Barbarians in the different provinces of Europe, and the dark ages that ensued. On these dark ages the light gradually dawned, till at length appeared the Revival of Learning and the Reformation. It is in this manner, therefore, that you have presented to you, by the addition of this last circumstance, a subject that is a sort of whole. You begin with marking the decline and depression of society, and you then watch its progress to a state of great comparative elevation.

But, instead of conducting your thoughts onward from the one to the other, in this natural succession, I must now interrupt them, because the great concerns of Europe were in fact thus broken in upon and interrupted; and though the whole of this interruption may be almost considered as a sort of episode to the main subject, I have no alternative but to produce it now, in its real place, and you must join the chain hereafter yourselves, the links of which must be considered as thus for a certain interval separated from each other. For the truth is, that you will scarcely have begun to read the books that I have recommended, when you will be called upon to observe a most extraordinary revolution that had taken place in the East.

An individual had started up amidst the sands of Arabia, had persuaded his countrymen that he was the prophet of God, had contrived to combine in his service two of the most powerful passions of the human heart, — the love of glory here, and the desire of happiness hereafter; and, triumphant in himself and seconded by his followers, had transmitted a faith and an empire that at length extended through Asia, Africa, Spain, and nearly through Europe itself; and had left in history a more memorable name, and on his fellow-creatures a more wide and lasting impression, than had ever before been produced by the energies of a single mind. This individual was Mahomet.

We are invited to examine and estimate a revolution like this by many considerations. I will mention some of them. The learning of the disciples of Mahomet is at one particular period connected with the history of literature. The Saracens (for this is their general, but not very intelligible, appellation) contended with the Franks and Greeks for Europe, with the Latins for the Holy Land, with the Visigoths for Spain. The Caliphs, or successors of the Arabian Prophet, were possessed of Syria, Persia, and Egypt, and through different eras of their power exhibited the most opposite prodigies of simplicity



and magnificence. These are powerful claims on our attention. The Turks, who became converts to the religion of Mahomet, gradually swelled into a great nation, obtained a portion of Europe, and have materially influenced its history.

If we turn from the descendants of Mahomet to Mahomet himself, we must observe, that his religion professed to be derived from divine inspiration, and is, from its very pretensions, entitled to the examination of every rational being. To be unacquainted with this religion is to be ignorant of the faith of a large division of mankind. An inquiry into the rise and propagation of it will amplify our knowledge of human nature; and an attention to the life of the Prophet may enlarge our comprehension of the many particular varieties of the human character. The religion of Mahomet has, in the last place, often been compared with the religion of Christ; and the success of the Koran has been adduced to weaken the argument that is drawn from the propagation of the Gospel.

If such, therefore, be the subject before us, it is evidently sufficient to awaken our curiosity, and we may be grateful to those meritorious scholars who have saved us from the necessity of pursuing our inquiries through the volumes of the original authors. The Arabic writers have been translated; and the interesting occupation of a few weeks, or even days, may now be sufficient to satisfy our mind on topics that might otherwise have justly demanded the labor of years.

With respect, then, to the books that are to be read, I would propose to you, in the first place, to turn to the work of Sale, — Sale's Koran; — read the preface and his preliminary dissertation, consulting, at the same time, his references to the Koran. Of the Koran you may afterwards read a few chapters, to form an idea of the whole. And as it is a code of jurisprudence to the Mussulman, as well as a theological creed, you may easily, by referring to the index, collect the opinions and precepts of Mahomet on all important points. You may then turn to the Life of Mahomet by Prideaux, and, on the same subject, to the Modern Universal History; you may then read the fiftieth chapter of Mr. Gibbon, and close with the Bampton Lectures of Professor White.

Prideaux, and the authors of the Modern History, you will probably think unreasonably eager to expose the faults of the Prophet, and you will surely be attracted to a second consideration of the work of Sale by the candor, the reasonableness, and the great knowledge of the subject, which that excellent author appears everywhere to display.

These works, however, will but the better prepare you to discern the merit of the splendid and complete account which Mr. Gibbon has given of the Arabian legislator and prophet. The historian has descended on this magnificent subject in all the fulness of his strength. His fiftieth chapter is not without his characteristic faults, but it has

all his merits; and to approach the account of Mahomet and the Caliphs in Gibbon, after travelling through the same subject in the volumes of the Modern History, is to pass through the different regions of the country whose heroes these authors have described; it is to turn from the one Arabia to the other,—from the sands and rocks of the wilderness to the happy land of fertility and freshness, where every landscape is luxuriance, and every gale is odor.

The Bampton Lectures have received very unqualified approbation from the public, and have won the more cold and limited, and therefore more decisive, praise of Mr. Gibbon. The estimate of the student will probably be found between the two,—much beyond the latter, and much within the former. There is not all the information given which the knowledge of Professor White might and ought to have afforded. The references to the Arabic authors should have been translated and produced. The whole is written, not in the spirit of a critic and a judge, but of an eloquent advocate rejoicing to run his course, from a confidence in the arguments which he displays. The style is always too full and sounding, and the argument itself is often robbed of its due effect from a want of that simplicity of statement, so natural, so favorable to the cause of truth. Yet these celebrated discourses cannot fail of accomplishing their end, of enforcing upon the reader the general evidence of his own faith, and of animating his mind with the contrast between the religion of the Koran and that of the Gospel, between Mahomet and Jesus,—the contrast between falsehood and truth, between the fierce and polluted passions of the earth and the pure and perfect holiness of heaven.

I had intended briefly to state the leading points of the life and religion of Mahomet; but I would rather that the guides I have mentioned should conduct you through the whole of a subject which is, in fact, too interesting and important to be touched upon in a general or summary manner. The effect of inquiry will be materially to diminish the general impression of wonder with which every reflecting mind must have originally surveyed a triumph of imposture so extensive as that of Mahomet. The causes of his success have been well explained by the authors I have mentioned. Yet, gifted as he was with every mental and personal qualification, and highly assisted in his enterprise by the moral and political situation of his countrymen, the student cannot fail to observe how slow and painful was the progress of his empire and religion. After becoming affluent at an early period of life, he continued fifteen years in habits of occasional solitude and meditation. He was three years in effecting the conversion of his wife, his slave, his cousin, and eleven others; he was ten years employed in extending the number of his disciples within the walls of Mecca. This long interval (twenty-eight years) had elapsed, before the guardians of the established idolatry were duly alarmed, and proceeded, from opposition, at last to attempt his



life. After flying from Mecca, and being received and protected at Medina, it was six years before he could again approach his native city; two more, before he could establish there his sovereignty and his worship; and two more, before the various tribes of Arabia could be brought to acknowledge him for their prophet. On several occasions, the fate of himself and of his religion hung on the most wavering and doubtful balance. It was not Mahomet who conquered the East, but his successors; and had he not attached to his fortunes and faith a few men of singular virtues and extraordinary military talents, his name and his religion might have perished with him, and the Arabians, at his death, might have relapsed into their former habits of loose political association, and of blind, unthinking idolatry.

To Mahomet, indeed, his success must have appeared complete. Arabia must have been the natural boundary of his thoughts; and every thing in Arabia he had conquered, and it was his own: he was become the great chief of his nation, and he held a still dearer empire over their feelings and their faith: he was the leader of an invincible army, but he was more than an earthly conqueror; he was considered as the prophet of God; mere humanity was below him. It was at this moment of his elevation, when he was preparing to extend his temporal and spiritual dominion to Syria, that the angel of death was at hand to close his eyes for ever on the prospects of human greatness, and to remove him to the presence of that awful Being whose laws he had violated, whose name he had abused, and whose creatures he had deceived.

That an enthusiast like Mahomet should arise in Arabia can be no matter of surprise. The nation itself was of a temperament highly impetuous and ardent, unaccustomed to the severer exercises of the understanding, the inquiries of science, and the acquisition of knowledge, devoted only to eloquence and poetry, the impulses of the passions, and the visions of the imagination. An enthusiast, like himself, had arisen and been destroyed a little before his death; another, soon after. In the time of the Caliphs, after an interval of two hundred and sixty years, appeared the Arabian preacher Carmath. He too, like Mahomet, made his converts, dispersed his apostles amongst the tribes of the desert, and they were everywhere successful. The Carmathians were sublimed into the same fanatical contempt of death and devotion to their chiefs as had been before the followers of Mahomet. They overran Arabia, trampled upon Mecca, and were one of the effective causes of the decline and fall of the Caliphs.

More temperate climates, more civilized countries, than those of the East, even times improved like our own, have witnessed the rise, and, to a certain degree, success, of enthusiasts who have made considerable approaches to the pretensions of Mahomet. The German



Swedenborg\* entirely equalled him in his claims on the credulity of mankind; he affirmed distinctly, that he had a regular communication with heaven. Like other enthusiasts, he was unable to prove his mission; but he convinced himself, and had his converts in different parts of Europe.

Of Mahomet, as of others, it is often asked whether he was an enthusiast or an impostor. He was both. In men like him the characters are never long separated. It is the essence of enthusiasm to overrate its end, to overvalue its authority; all means are therefore easily sanctified that can accomplish its purposes. Imposture is only one amongst others; and as it is the nature of enthusiasm at the same time to overlook the distinctions of reason and propriety, what is or what is not imposture is not always discerned, nor would be long regarded, if it were.

The designs of Mahomet are often supposed to have originated early in life, and to have been formed from a long, comprehensive, and profound meditation on the situation of his countrymen and the nations of the East. It is not thus that great changes in the affairs of men are produced; it is not thus that the founders of dynasties, the authors of revolutions, and the conquerors of the world proceed. Men like these are formed, not only by original temperament and genius, but by situation and by the occasion; their ideas open with their circumstances, their ambition expands with their fortune; they are gifted with the prophetic eye that can see the moment that is pregnant with the future; they are distinguishable by the faculty that discerns what is really impossible from what only appears to be so; they can avail themselves of the powers and capacities of every thing around them; the time, the place, the circumstances, the society, the nation, all are at the proper instant understood, and wielded to their purpose. They are the rapid, decisive, fearless, and often desperate rulers of inferior minds; not the calm reasoners or profound contrivers of distant schemes of aggrandizement, seen through a long series of concatenated events,—events which, as they well know, are ever liable to be disturbed by the ceaseless agitations and business of human life, and the unexpected interference of occurrences, which it may be their fortune, indeed, and their wisdom, to seize and employ, but which they cannot possibly produce or foresee.

The propagation of the faith of Mahomet by his generals and friends, the conquest of Syria, Persia, Africa, and Spain, the different empires of the Caliphs, and all that is important in the learning of their subjects, or in their own magnificence and decline, may be collected from Gibbon. To the same masterly author we may refer for the impression made on Hindostan by Mahomet of Gazna, and the fluctuating history and final success of the Turks. These sub-

\* The epithet "German" is misapplied here. Swedenborg was a native and subject of Sweden. — N.

jects, striking and important in their main events, cannot well be endured in all the tame and minute detail of the writers of the Modern History. The very curious history of the Saracens given by Ockley should be consulted, and is somewhat necessary to enable the student more exactly to comprehend the character of the Arabians, which is there displayed, by their own writers, in all its singularities. The siege of Damascus, for instance, may be selected; it is related by Ockley, illuminated by Gibbon, dramatized by Hughes, and it may, therefore, exercise the philosophy, the taste, and the imagination of a discerning reader.

The empires of the East bowed before the concentrated tribes of Arabia, who passed over them with all the force and rapidity of a whirlwind; these new centaurs it was equally impossible to face, as they advanced, or pursue, as they retreated. It is true, that these eastern empires were at the time particularly unfitted to sustain any powerful attack; but what could have been opposed to the natives of the desert, educated in the most tremendous habits of privation and activity, and in habits, still more tremendous, of fanaticism and fury?

To give one instance out of a thousand that must have existed. — “Repose yourself,” said Derar; “you are fatigued by fighting with this dog.” — “He that labors to-day,” replied Caled, “shall rest in the world to come, shall rest to-morrow.” — “Great God!” said Akbah, as he spurred his horse into the Atlantic, “if I were not stopped by this sea, I would still go on and put to the sword the rebellious nations that worship any other gods than thee.” — “God is victorious,” said Ali four hundred times in a nocturnal combat, as each time he cut down an infidel. Such were the generals. — “I see the Houries looking upon me,” said an Arabian youth; “and there is one that beckons me, and calls, ‘Come hither!’” — and, with these words, he charged the Christians everywhere, making havoc till he was struck down and expired. — “Fight!” “Paradise!” “God is victorious!” — these were the shouts of war. Such were the soldiers. — And while such was the army, the battle might be bloody, but the victory was certain.

The transmission of the faith of Mahomet pure and unadulterated, the same faith which he originally delivered, is, no doubt, remarkable; and the absence of any clerical order among the Moslems, and the union of the regal and sacerdotal characters in the commanders of the faithful, may perhaps explain this striking phenomenon. But the continuance of the religion at all, as it is not founded in truth, is deserving of regard. It must be remembered, that it gained possession of the eastern nations, and subsisted several centuries under the Caliphs, with whose power it was identified. It was easily propagated among the wandering conquerors of the East, — men without knowledge and without reflection, whose religious creeds were readily formed, slightly considered, and loosely held, and whose military and



arbitrary government indisposed and disabled them from all exercise of their reason in the search of truth. The Koran must also be considered as not only a religious, but a civil code. To alter, therefore, the religion of a Mahometan is to alter his opinions, habits, and feelings, — to give him a new character, a new nature. Add to this, that the intolerant expressions and precepts of the Koran have been so improved upon by the followers of Mahomet, that the great characteristic of their religion is, and has been long, a deadly hostility and fixed contempt for the professors of every other belief. The Koran, therefore, when once established, was, humanly speaking, established for ever; and it has now for eleven centuries occupied the faith of a large, but unenlightened, portion of mankind.

But this permanency of the religion and institutions of Mahomet has been in every respect a misery to his disciples and a misfortune to the human race. It might have been possible for Mahomet to mould the simplicity and independence of the Arabians into some form of government favorable to the civil liberty of his followers and to the improvement of their character and happiness; but no speculations of this kind seem ever to have approached his mind; all civil and ecclesiastical power was united in his own person, and he left it, without further reflection, to be the portion of his successors. The result has been fatal to his disciples; their caliphs and sultans have been the leaders of fanatics, or the now arbitrary, now trembling, rulers of soldiers and janizaries; but they have never enjoyed the far more elevated distinction of the limited monarchs of a free people. The East has, therefore, made no advance; it is still left in a state of inferiority to Europe, and it has derived from Mahomet no accession of wisdom or vigor to regenerate its inhabitants, or save them from the enterprise and plunder of the West. In vain did he destroy the idols of his countrymen and sublime their faith to the worship of the one true God; in vain did he inculcate compassion to the distressed, alms to the needy, protection and tenderness to the widow and the orphan. He neither abolished nor discountenanced polygamy; and the professors of his faith have thus been left the domestic tyrants of one half of their own race. He taught predestination; and they have thus become, by their crude application of his doctrine, the victims of every natural disease and calamity. He practised intolerance; and they are thus made the enemies of the civilized world. He permitted the union of the regal and sacerdotal offices, and he made the book of his religion and legislation the same. All alteration, therefore, among the Mahometans must have been thought impiety; lost in the scale of thinking beings, they have exhibited families without society, subjects without freedom, governments without security, and nations without improvement. For centuries they have continued the destroyers of others, and been destroyed themselves, — the ministers and the victims of cruelty and



death; and even when appearing in their most promising form of an established European empire, such has been their bigoted attachment to their Koran, that they have been contented to decline and fall with the progress of improvement in surrounding nations, to see their military science become contemptible, their strength unwieldy, their courage stagnate without hope or effort, and even their virtues languish, if possible, without respect or use.

The student may now once more make a pause, and return to consider the state of Europe at this particular period. The nations of the West have been the objects of his attention, and he has been called aside to observe the appearance of a great revolution that had taken place in the East; and supposing him now to renew his speculations with respect to the happiness of mankind, there seems little to afford him any pleasure for the present, or any hope for the future. This interference of the followers of Mahomet from the East in the affairs of Europe can only give the prospect a new and additional gloom; their religion is not true, their civil polity is destructive to liberty. Most fortunately, they have, indeed, been driven back by Charles Martel and the Franks; but they may ultimately make some permanent and considerable settlement in the western world, which can in no case be favorable to its interests.

But what, in the mean time, has been the fate of Europe itself? The student will recollect the hopes with which we entered on its history at the accession of Clovis. The Christian religion, the Roman arts, literature, and law, might have tempered and improved, it had been fondly supposed, the bold independence and simple virtues of the Barbarian character; and the result might have been that mixture of freedom and restraint, of natural reason and divine illumination, which gives the last finish and perfection to the dignity and happiness of human nature. How different, how melancholy, has been the event! We are now supposed to have travelled through five centuries, and there is no liberty, no knowledge, and no religion. Instead of liberty, there has grown up the feudal system; instead of knowledge, darkness has overspread the land, and thick darkness the people; and instead of religion, there has arisen a long train of ceremonies and observances, and the empire of the priest, in the odious sense of the word, has been established over the conscience and the happiness of his blind and unresisting votaries.

All this is surely mournful to behold, yet it is all in the natural order of things; the speculation that hoped otherwise was inattentive to the great laws of human nature. A state of natural liberty, for example, implies a state of ignorance; and the result of both cannot, in the first instance, be civil liberty. Of the same ignorance, in like manner, the result cannot be religion; the result can be only superstition. Religion, even if, by peculiar interposition, it had been received pure, would soon be disfigured and corrupted, and become a

gross and comfortless system of blind devotion. It must be ever thus. They who would indispose men to all restraint prepare them, not for civil liberty, but for mutual violence, to end, at length, in submission to some military leader, or in the tyranny of a few. They, in like manner, who would keep men in ignorance, the better to incline them to the observances of religion, prepare them for superstition, and not for the reasonable sacrifice of the heart; and as ignorance in the hearer must be followed by ignorance and usurpation in the teacher, the priest and the people will each in their turn contribute to the debasement of the other.

Abandoning, therefore, all our former expectations of the happy effects that were on a sudden to arise from that new mixture of civilized and uncivilized life which took place in Europe on the conquest and settlement of the northern nations, we must now be only anxious to observe how the evils that had been established *gradually* softened, or were at length counteracted, by *attendant* causes of good; how the clouds cleared away that overhung these Middle Ages; how the interests of society became at last progressive, lost and hopeless as at this melancholy period they certainly appeared.

The great evils that existed, the great objects of attention, are the Feudal System and the Papal Power. As we read the facts of history, we may be enabled to observe the more obvious effects of these two great calamities by which mankind were oppressed; but we must carefully recollect that far more was suffered than history can possibly express. History can exhibit an emperor, like Henry the Fourth of Germany, barefooted and in penance for three winter days before the palace of the Pope; or a feudal lord, like Earl Warren, producing his sword as the title-deeds of his estate; but history cannot enter into the recesses of private life, and can by no means delineate what was daily and hourly suffered by the inhabitants of the towns or country from the unrestrained and uncivilized usurpation of the feudal lords, from "the oppressor's wrong, the proud man's contumely." Still less can history describe the more obscure and silent, but not less dreadful, effects of ecclesiastical despotism; the hopeless, yet protracted, languor of some mistaken victim of credulity in the odious cell of a monastery; or all that was suffered by the terrified imagination of him who had incurred the censures of the Church or the overwhelming evils of excommunication. Even if we suppose the slave no longer to complain, and the monk no longer to feel, still, that destruction of the faculties, that debasement of the nature, which is so complete as to be unperceived by the individual himself, is on that very account but a more deserving object of our compassion: the maniac who dances heedless in his chains but awakens our pity the more.

We must now, therefore, observe, as we proceed in history, that whatever advanced the authority of either the feudal system or the



Papal power was, on the whole, unfavorable to the interests of mankind; whatever has a contrary tendency should be watched and examined with the greatest anxiety, for it is the only hope of future improvement.

Now it often happens in human affairs, that the evil and the remedy grow up at the same time; the remedy unnoticed, and, at a distance, scarce visible, perhaps, above the earth; while the evil may shoot rapidly into strength, and alone catch the eye of the observer by the immensity of its shadow and the fulness of its luxuriance. The eternal law, however, which imposes change upon all things, insensibly produces its effect, and a subsequent age may be enabled to mark how the one declined and the other advanced; how the life and the vigor were gradually transferred; and how returning spring seemed no longer to renew the honors of the one, while it summoned into progress and maturity the promise and perfection of the other. No more useful exercise can be offered to us than to trace, if possible, the opposite successions of alterations like these. As we read modern history, for a few centuries from the success of the northern nations, we shall be doomed to observe the shades of tyranny, temporal and spiritual, deepening as we advance; but the light will at last begin to glimmer, then to be faintly discernible, at length be found distinctly to approach us, and in a few centuries more to break forth from the clouds, and the day appear.

Witnessing, as we ourselves have done, what the mind of man is capable of performing in literature and science, seeing what enjoyment his nature is fitted to receive from the intercourse of polished and social life, it is with the most comfortless sensations that we survey the situation of mankind at this dark period of their history, and with the most intolerable impatience that we travel through the long and at last but too imperfect struggle which literature and science, freedom and religion, had to maintain with ignorance, slavery, and superstition. This interesting subject has been, in part, investigated by Dr. Robertson,—one of those few writers who can furnish himself with the learning of an antiquarian, and then exhibit it in a form and in a compass that admits of a perusal even amid the business and amusements of modern life. Never advancing in his text more than is necessary, his proofs and illustrations are not doubtful and imperfect, such as the reader understands with difficulty and assents to with hesitation, but concise and satisfactory; all appears reasonable, unembarrassed, and complete,—the diligence of a scholar, with the good sense of a man of business and of the world. The dissertation prefixed to his *Charles the Fifth* deserves the study of, and is accessible to, almost every reader.

If there be any (and some there may) who are repulsed by what is called, in familiar language, the dryness of the subject, they may suspend this inquiry for a season, and repeat the experiment here



after. The studies of men alter as they advance in life,—alter rapidly; the thoughts of youth are not those of a maturer period; time, that improves us not in many respects, improves us materially in some; by mitigating the rage for the more selfish and violent pleasures, it renders the mind accessible to more calm and dignified anxieties; and many a man, who, in all the insolence of youthful hope and health and gayety, had thought of little but himself, may, in a few years, think of others and of mankind, and pursue with due interest the fortunes of his species through the pages of Robertson or of Stuart, of Smith, of Montesquieu, or of Hume.

From Robertson a very full and distinct idea may be formed of the unhappy effects which the feudal system produced on the inhabitants of the town and the country, and particularly of the extent and violence to which the practice of private war was carried by the greater and lesser barons, the unhappy influence of so disordered a state of society on science and the arts, on knowledge and religion, on the characters and virtues of the human mind. He will then see delineated the salutary effect which the Crusades had on the manners, and the state of property; and he will see noticed, also, their commercial effect. The next cause of improvement which the historian points out is the rise and establishment of free cities, communities, and corporations; and he shows the happy alteration which they effected in the condition of the people, in the power of the nobility, in the power of the crown, and in the general industry of the community; how this effect was still increased, as the inhabitants of cities became gradually possessed of political authority; how it was still more widely extended with the extension of commerce, and with the science which was caught from the Greeks and Arabians; how men were softened and refined by chivalry; and how the administration of justice was made more regular, and society rendered capable of still further improvement, by the gradual abolition of private war and the judicial combat, by the introduction of appeals from the courts of the barons, and by the introduction of the canon and Roman law.

After Robertson, the work of Gilbert Stuart should be diligently searched. And here, for the first time, the reader will meet with observations injurious to the fame and authority of Dr. Robertson. Yet that fame and authority are, on the whole, rather confirmed than weakened by the animadversions of Stuart; for, with great ability and learning, and with great eagerness to find fault, his objections are, after all, but few, and of no decisive importance. He detracts not, he says, from the diligence of Dr. Robertson, whose laboriousness is acknowledged; and his remark, or accusation rather, is, that the Doctor's "total abstinence from all ideas and inventions of his own permitted him to carry an undivided attention to other men's thoughts and speculations." Dr. Stuart forgets, that to take

an extensive view, and to form a rational estimate of the facts and opinions before him, is a considerable part, if not the whole, of the merit that can be required in an historian; that an historian, though he may be more, should in the first place be a guide, and that men of invention and speculation are of all guides the least to be trusted.

Two thirds of Stuart's work consists of notes; and this, I must observe, is the only way in which any estimate can be given of the situation of society at any particular period. Nothing should be laid down in a text that cannot be directly proved or fairly implied from some original document referred to or quoted in the notes. Views of society are, otherwise, views only of an author's own ingenuity and sentiments; and whoever consults the authorities to which our most established writers appeal will not always find their representations justified, especially when these historians have, what Dr. Stuart so much admires, ideas and notions of their own. Historians, also, are far too apt to copy each other. The student should therefore consult, in several instances, the references of a writer; and he can then form an opinion to what confidence he is entitled. It is scarcely possible that the vigilance of an author should not sometimes relax, or his discernment be sometimes clouded.

From the work of Dr. Stuart the student will derive information respecting the rise of chivalry and of the feudal system; the different characters which belonged to these institutions at two different periods; what he esteems their original grandeur and virtue, and what every one must esteem their subsequent debasement and corruption; and he concludes with remarking upon the alterations that followed in the military system and in the manners of society. The mind of the author is, no doubt, vigorous, and his learning great; we see, too, in his representation of the favorable periods of chivalry and the feudal system, strong marks of that eloquence which was displayed in the defence of the unfortunate Mary.

The view which Dr. Robertson has taken of the progress of society is marked, according to Stuart, by a variety of omissions. I shall venture, however, to propose once more to the consideration of my hearers the still more contracted estimate of this great subject which I have already mentioned. The leading and important evils of mankind, I must still contend, became at last the feudal system and the Papal power; the attention, therefore, may be fixed, as I conceive, chiefly on these. Whatever had a tendency to break up and dissipate the power so collected was favorable to the interests of mankind, and the contrary. All healthful motion and activity were, by these two great causes of evil, excluded from society; military exercises and church ceremonies were the only result; and whatever withdrew the human mind into any new direction could not fail to assist the progress of general improvement. I will say a word, and but a word, on each.



With respect, then, first, to the feudal power. This feudal power lay in the great lords, and in the king, as the greatest of those lords. In England the situation of things was not exactly the same as in the rest of Europe, from the greater influence of the crown: but in general it may be said, that whatever shook and scattered the power of the great barons was favorable to civil liberty, even if the power was, in the event, to be transferred entirely to the king; it was less injurious, thus single, than when multiplied among the lords; and there was always a probability, that, in the course of the struggle, the commons might come in for a part, if not the whole, of the share that belonged to them.

The great cause, then, of the improvement of society during these centuries was the rise and progress of Commerce; for the great point to be attained was the elevation of the lower orders. Both the crown and the barons were sufficiently ready, each of them, to employ the lower orders against the other. Consequence was therefore given to this oppressed race of men, and immunities and privileges were afforded to them, more particularly in the towns and cities. The result was commerce, which again added to the consequence they had before acquired.

As the towns and cities were on various accounts materially leagued with the crown, the power of the barons was thus, on the whole, assaulted from without. But it was also attacked and wasted from within. A taste was gradually introduced for the more elegant and expensive enjoyments of life, and the barons could not spend their revenues on themselves, and at the same time on their retainers,—at once on articles of luxury, and in rude hospitality. The number of their retainers was therefore diminished,—that is, their power and political importance. The whole subject has been admirably explained by Smith in his third book of the *Wealth of Nations*, and I depend on your reading it; leaving here a blank in my lectures, which you must yourselves fill up. It would be an improper use of your time to offer you here, in an imperfect manner, what can be afforded you, and far better afforded you, by the study of this very masterly part of his celebrated work. A great part of Smith's reasonings had appeared in the *History of Hume*. These two eminent philosophers—for on the subjects of political economy and morals they deserve the name—had, no doubt, in their mutual intercourse, enlightened and confirmed the inquiries and conclusions of each other.

The Crusades are considered by authors in general, and by Dr. Robertson, as a powerful cause of the improvement of society. You will see his reasons. And you will observe that Smith conceives, that, from the great waste and destruction of people and of capital, they must rather have retarded the progress of the greater part of Europe, though favorable to some Italian cities. You will perceive,



also, that Gibbon agrees with Smith. But the question is, whether the stock and population thus transported to Palestine would have been turned to any proper purposes of accumulation or improvement, if left to remain at home. At the close of his remarks on this subject, Mr. Gibbon appears to me to have determined this question not a little against himself, by a very beautiful illustration which he offers to his reader, after the manner of the great orator of antiquity, — an illustration which at once conveys an image to the fancy and an argument to the understanding. “The conflagration,” says he, “which destroyed the tall and barren trees of the forest gave air and scope to the vegetation of the smaller and nutritive plants of the soil”; that is, the Crusades destroyed the feudal lords, and brought forward the middle and lower orders.

Another cause of the improvement of society was the fortune, whatever it might be, by which the crown became, in the great kingdoms of Europe, hereditary. The royal power was thus rendered always ready to gain whatever could be lost, to proceed from one accession to another, and to be the great and permanent reservoir into which the feudal authority had constantly a tendency to flow. I have before observed, that the power was less injurious, thus collected, than when indefinitely multiplied and exhibited in the person of any baron; and that there was a probability that the commons would receive their share, in the course of the transfer.

With respect to the causes which shook the ecclesiastical power of Rome, the second great evil of society, they may be comprised in two words, that at this period of the world were of kindred nature, — Heresy and Knowledge. The gradual progress of these causes, and their final success, may be hereafter considered. The student may, however, look upon either of them, whenever it appears in the history of these times, as the symptom and harbinger of the subsequent Reformation. Ignorance and superstition are naturally allied; their cause is common, their friends and enemies the same. The opposers of a barbarous philosophy are soon entangled in the misapprehensions and corruptions of an abused religion; the spirit of inquiry which struggles with the one is immediately suspected of a secret hostility to the other. The student, as he proceeds in his historical course, will soon be called on to observe the Albigenses, the Lollards, and the Hussites, with our earlier sages and philosophers, exhibiting, amid the chains and dungeons of the Inquisition or of the civil power, the melancholy grandeur of persecuted truth and insulted genius. These first, but unfortunate, luminaries of Europe were, however, not lost to the world: the Reformation and the revival of learning at last took place; the pillar of light continued to march before mankind in their journey through the darkness of the desert, and it was in vain that the oppressor would have prevented their escape from their houses of bondage, or denied

them the possession of the promised land of religion, liberty, and knowledge.

I conclude this general subject with observing, that the Crusades, while they so happily dispersed the possessions and influence of the great lords, and therefore so materially assisted the progress of society, contributed to the influence of the clergy, and that in the most unfavorable manner, by furnishing them with relics and miracles, and with new and multiplied modes of extending and confirming the superstition of the age. But I must at the same time remark, once for all, that the power which the clergy enjoyed was not always exercised to the injury of society; in many most important respects materially otherwise. They shook the power of the barons, by contriving to draw within their own jurisdiction the disputes and causes which had belonged to the feudal courts; they had always kept alive in society whatever knowledge, amidst such rapine and disorder, could be suffered to exist; they were the instructors of youth; they were the historians of the times; they maintained in existence the Latin language; they were the only preservers of the remains of Greek and Roman literature; they everywhere endeavoured to mitigate and abolish slavery; they were the most favorable landlords to the peasantry, to the lower orders the mildest masters; they labored most anxiously and constantly to soften and abolish the system of private war, by establishing truces and intermissions, and by assisting the civil magistrate on every possible occasion; they were everywhere, in those times of violence, a description of men whose habits and manners were those of peace and order; they could not profess such a religion as Christianity without dispensing, amidst all their misrepresentations, the general doctrines of purity and benevolence, and without being, in a word, the representatives of what learning and civilization, moderation and mercy, were yet to be found. These were great and transcendent merits. That their power was inordinate, and that they abused it most grossly, is but too true: a strong proof, if any were wanting, that power should always be suspected, and should be checked and divided by every possible contrivance. In this instance it was capable of converting into the rulers, and often into the tyrants, of the earth, men who breathed the precepts of meekness and lowliness of heart, and who continually affirmed that their kingdom was not of this world.

Such are the general views which I have been enabled to form of the situation and prospects of society during these Middle Ages, and such are the writers on whom I have depended for instruction, and to whose labors I must now finally refer you.

But before I conclude my lecture, I must make a particular remark. It cannot have escaped your observation how often I have mentioned the historian Gibbon; how much I leave entirely to depend upon him; the manner in which I refer to him, as the fittest



writer to supply you with information in all the earlier stages of modern history, and, indeed, as the only writer that you are likely to undertake to read; add to this, that I have already had occasion, and shall often hereafter have occasion, to mention his History in terms either of admiration or respect. Yet I cannot be supposed ignorant of the very material objections which exist to this History; and I am certainly not at ease in recommending those parts of the work which I do approve, while I know there is so much, both in the matter and manner of the whole, and of every part of it, which I cannot approve. I am therefore necessitated to make some observations on this celebrated writer, unfavorable as well as favorable, and this I must do with a minuteness disproportionate to all unity and keeping in the composition of general lectures like these. I am compelled to do so by the nature of the audience I am addressing, and by the fame of the author.

In the chapters which I in the first lecture referred to the faults of this great historian do not appear. In the earlier part of his work he respected the public and was more diffident of himself. Success produced its usual effects; his peculiar faults were more and more visible as his work advanced, and in his later volumes he seems to take a pride, as is too commonly the case among men of genius, in indulging himself in liberties which he would certainly have denied to others. And as the powers of the writer strengthened as he went on, and kept pace with his disposition to abuse them, the History of the Decline and Fall became, at last, a work so singularly constituted, that the objections to it are too obvious to escape the most ordinary observer, while its merits are too extensive and profound to be fully ascertained by the most learned of its admirers.

These faults will only be the more deeply lamented by those who can best appreciate such extraordinary merits. Men of genius are fitted by their nature, not only to instruct the understanding, but to fill the imagination and interest the heart. It is mournful to see the defects of their greatness; it is painful to be checked in the generous career of our applause. With what surprise and disgust are we to see in such a writer as Gibbon the most vulgar relish for obscenity! With what pain are we to find him exercising his raillery and sarcasm on such a subject as Christianity! How dearly shall we purchase the pleasure and instruction to be derived from his work, if modesty is to be sneered away from our minds, and piety from our feelings! There seems no excuse for this celebrated writer on these two important points; he must have known that some of the best interests of society are connected with the respectability of the female character; and with regard to his chapters on the progress of Christianity, and the various passages of attack with which his work abounds, it is in vain to say, that, as a lover of truth, he was called



upon to oppose those opinions which he deemed erroneous ; for he was concerned, as an historian, only with the effects of this religion, and not with its evidences, — with its influence on the affairs of the world, not with its truth or falsehood.

It would be to imitate the fault to which I object, were I now to travel out of my appointed path, and attempt to comment upon these parts of his work. But as they who hear me are at a season of life when liveliness and sarcasm have but too powerful a charm, more particularly if employed upon subjects that are serious, it may not be improper to remind them how often it has been stated, and justly stated, that questions of this nature are to be approached neither by liveliness nor by sarcasm, but by calm reasoning and regular investigation ; and that to subject them to any other criterion, to expose them to any other influence, is to depart from the only mode we possess of discovering truth on any occasion, but more especially on those points which youth, as well as age, will soon discover to be of the most immeasurable importance.

If we pass from the matter to the manner of this celebrated work, how are we not to be surprised, when we find a writer, who has meditated the finest specimens of ancient and modern literature, forgetting the first and most obvious requisite of the composition he is engaged in, — simplicity of narrative ! In the History of Mr. Gibbon, facts are often insinuated, rather than detailed ; the story is alluded to, rather than told ; a commentary on the history is given, rather than the history itself ; many paragraphs, and some portions of the work, are scarcely intelligible without that previous knowledge which it was the proper business of the historian himself to have furnished. The information which is afforded is generally conveyed by abstract estimates, — a mode of writing which is never comprehended without an effort of the mind more or less painful ; and when this exertion is so continually to be renewed, it soon ceases to be made. The reader sees, without instruction, sentence succeed to sentence, in appearance little connected with each other ; cloud rolls on after cloud in majesty and darkness ; and at last retires from the work, to seek relief in the chaster composition of Robertson, or the unambitious beauties of Hume.

On this account, it is absolutely necessary to apprise the student of what it might, at first, seem somewhat strange to mention, — that he will not receive all the benefit which he might otherwise derive from the labors of this great writer, unless he reads but little of his work at the same time. It is not that his paragraphs, though full and sounding, signify nothing, but that they comprehend too much ; and the reader must have his faculties, at every instant, fresh and effective, or he will not possess himself of the treasures, which are concealed, rather than displayed, in a style so sententious and elaborate. The perversity of genius is proverbial ; but surely it has been seldom

more unfortunately exercised than in corrupting and disfiguring so magnificent a work.

For, the moment we reverse the picture, the merits of the historian are as striking as his faults. If his work be not always history, it is often something more than history, and above it: it is philosophy, it is theology, it is wit and eloquence, it is criticism the most masterly upon every subject with which literature can be connected. If the style be so constantly elevated as to be often obscure, to be often monotonous, to be sometimes even ludicrously disproportioned to the subject, it must at the same time be allowed, that, whenever an opportunity presents itself, it is the striking and adequate representative of comprehensive thought and weighty remark.

It may be necessary, no doubt, to warn the student against the imitation of a mode of writing so little easy and natural. But the very necessity of the caution implies the attraction that is to be resisted; and it must be confessed that the chapters of the *Decline and Fall* are replete with paragraphs of such melody and grandeur as would be the fittest to convey to a youth of genius the full charm of literary composition, and such as, when once heard, however unattainable to the immaturity of his own mind, he would alone consent to admire or sigh to emulate.

History is always a work of difficulty; but the difficulties with which Mr. Gibbon had to struggle were of more than ordinary magnitude. Truth was to be discovered and reason was to be exercised upon times where truth was little valued and reason but little concerned. The materials of history were often to be collected from the synods of prelates, the debates of polemics, the relations of monks, and the panegyrics of poets. Hints were to be caught, a narrative was to be gathered up, from documents broken and suspicious, from every barbarous relic of a barbarous age; and, on the whole, the historian was to be left to the most unceasing and unexampled exercise of criticism, comparison, and conjecture. Yet all this, and more than all this, has been accomplished. The public have been made acquainted with periods of history which were before scarcely accessible to the most patient scholars. Order and interest and importance have been given to what appeared to defy every power of perspicacity and genius. Even the fleeting shadows of polemical divinity have been arrested, embodied, and adorned; and the same pages which instruct the theologian might add a polish to the liveliness of the man of wit, and imagery to the fancy of the poet. The vast and obscure regions of the Middle Ages have been penetrated and disclosed; and the narrative of the historian, while it descends, like the Nile, through lengthened tracts of present sterility and ancient renown, pours, like the Nile, the exuberance of its affluence on every object which it can touch, and gives fertility to the rock and verdure to the desert.

When such is the work, it is placed beyond the justice or the injustice of criticism; the Christian may have but too often very just reason to complain, the moralist to reprove, the man of taste to censure, — even the historical inquirer may be fatigued and irritated by the unseasonable and obscure splendor through which he is to discover the objects of his research. But the whole is, notwithstanding, such an assemblage of merits so various, so interesting, and so rare, that the History of the Decline and Fall must always be considered as one of the most extraordinary monuments that have appeared of the literary powers of a single mind, and its fame can perish only with the civilization of the world.

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## LECTURE IV.

### THE DARK AGES.

I HAVE made a certain progress in the consideration of the earlier and more perplexing portions of modern history. I have, as I hope, introduced to your curiosity the general subjects that belong to it; and I have mentioned to you the writers who have so successfully displayed the philosophy of history, while considering these particular times, — Hume, Robertson, and Smith, Stuart, Gibbon, and the Abbé de Mably.

But while you are forming general views and studying these writers, you must acquire, by some means or other, a proper knowledge of those very facts and those very details of history which have been present to the minds of these distinguished reasoners while they were deducing their conclusions and forming their statements. In other words, you must acquire some proper knowledge of the French and German histories; and these histories are, for a long time, very tedious and repulsive.

The original documents from which the facts of the early part of the French history are to be collected will be found in a great work of the Benedictines, in eleven volumes, folio, — “*Recueil des Historiens des Gaules et de la France.*” This great work is seldom to be met with in England; it is in Albemarle Street, at the Royal Institution. But there is a work of a similar nature, by Duchesne, which you will find in all great libraries, — in our own, — and in which the original historians of France are collected. Gregory of Tours is the author most referred to, and parts of his work may be



consulted to acquire an idea of the whole: his defects and faults are obvious.

There has been lately published, by Dr. Ranken, a work containing a history of France through these earlier ages. It is not executed with any very particular judgment or any constant accuracy; yet, as the author's reading is very extensive, and as the work is never tedious, and particularly as it contains a variety of information not to be acquired without intolerable labor, the student may consult it with material advantage and with considerable amusement. It is to this work, therefore, I refer those who would study these early facts of the French history. At the same time, I must finally refer you to the Abridgment of Hénault, where the facts are well selected and arranged, and accompanied with valuable observations. There is a still better work, by Millot, on the French history, which might be consulted for the same purpose. And, lastly, there has been lately published a work by D'Anquetil, on the French history, in fourteen, or rather thirteen, octavo volumes. D'Anquetil is a writer of great reputation, and undertook the work at the recommendation of Bonaparte, who very sensibly desired him to draw up a history of France which could be read, disencumbered of those details which make the volumes of the French historians so repulsive and fatiguing.

Along with the French history, the work of Pfeffel must be looked at for the German history. Though every possible effort is made by this celebrated writer to render the early parts of his work as concise as possible, it is still a very disagreeable task to read through the particular history of those times; and readers will, in general, be content to catch up some of the particulars that are descriptive of the scene in a passing manner, and to confine their regular reading to the author's remarks on each particular period, which are given in a collected and summary way at the end of each period, and are drawn up with great skill and perspicuity. I would recommend to the reader to proceed beyond the period of the Saxon dynasty, which answers to the accession of Hugh Capet in the French history, and to labor, in some way or other, through the other two dynasties, and the Interregnum, until he reaches the accession of Rodolph, the founder of the celebrated house of Austria; afterwards he may take Coxe's History of Austria.

In overcoming this early part of the French and German history, much assistance will be derived, not only from Mr. Gibbon's History of the Decline and Fall, but also from a Sketch of Universal History, printed in his posthumous works, which will be found, in every word of it, deserving of attention. I must once more remind you, that the work of Mr. Butler on the German Empire is also indispensably necessary; that the Abbé de Mably is invaluable.

These will, I conceive, be sufficient; but it is desirable that to these should be added the work of Koch on the Revolutions of the

Middle Ages. The first edition, of 1790, may be easily procured, and might be sufficient; but the whole work has been new cast and amplified, and it is the last edition, of 1807, that should rather be purchased.

But I must enter a little further into particulars; for I must confess that this subject of French history is from the first, and always continues to be, one most perplexing to me; that is, it is perplexing to me to know what to recommend with any chance of its being read. For the German history, indeed, you must look at the general statements of Pfeffel in some general way, and then proceed with Coxe's House of Austria. But with respect to the history of France, the regular historians, Velly, Le Père Daniel, &c., are so voluminous, and it is so impossible to read them, that it is difficult to know what course to recommend.

What I propose, however, to the student, is this: that he should read the short history of D'Anquetil, which he may readily do,—there is very little reading in each volume, and the first volume and most of the second and third he may read slightly,—or that he should meditate well the History of Hénault, or the History of Milot; and that, in reading any of these histories, he should consider, in the first place, whether there may not be incidents mentioned which give him as clear an idea of the times as the most detailed representation: let these first be noted, and let these be all that he endeavours to remember. And next, let him consider whether some of the topics mentioned are not of such importance, that it may be advisable to look for them in the more detailed histories of Velly and Père Daniel, or Mézeray; or perhaps, indeed, pursue them through the original authors to which these writers refer.

I will endeavour to exemplify what I propose in both these particulars, and each in its order.

And, first, with respect to incidents characteristic of the state of the French constitution and of the times, such as I think it will, on the whole, be sufficient to remember.

In the reign of Hugh Capet, it is observed by Hénault that he took an early opportunity of having his son crowned at Orléans,—an example which was followed by his successors; and this is an indication that the hereditary nature of the crown was not yet established. It is observed that Louis the Eighth ascended the throne without any such previous ceremony; this was two centuries and a half afterwards, and affords an opposite conclusion; which is again confirmed by observing that Louis the Seventh, a century before, though crowned when prince, *omitted to renew the ceremony when king.*

Again, a message of expostulation or command was sent from Hugh Capet to the Count de Périgord, which ended with asking him who made him a count. The reply was, “Those who made you a



king." A striking specimen of the independent sovereignty of the barons, and of the original elective and baronial nature of the power of Hugh Capet.

His son Robert was excommunicated on account of his marriage, and therefore every thing that he touched was purified before it could be touched by others: such was the reasoning of the king's friends and attendants. Robert, to save his subjects from the guilt of perjury, made them swear upon a shrine from which he had withdrawn the relics: such was the reasoning of the king himself.

In the ensuing reign of Henry the First was established "The Truce of the Lord," a law which prohibited private combats from Wednesday night to Monday morning, because the intermediate days had been consecrated by particular passages in the life and sufferings of our Saviour. That men should be resolved to destroy each other in private war, or that they should by considerations of this kind be checked and moderated, is descriptive of the age; but that they should consent to be thus far bound, and no farther,—that they should reason and act in this mixed, inconsistent, and shuffling manner between their passions and their duty,—this is descriptive, not of these men and of this age, but of every man and of every age.

The next king, Philip the First, in 1102, buys his lands and does homage for them to the Count de Sancerre,—the king to his subject: a striking specimen of the feudal system. And it was two hundred years before so strange a submission could be altered into a less offensive acknowledgment; so strongly established were the provisions of this feudal system.

Early in the next reign, Louis le Gros was three years in mastering the castle of one of his barons. A few years afterwards, when the same king was threatened by the emperor of Germany, he was able to assemble two hundred thousand men. Such was the feudal system; so fitted for sudden, short, and violent efforts for the public defence against an enemy; so inadequate to produce the benefits of any system of general and domestic law, equally diffused over the whole of a community.

Near sixty years afterwards, his son, Louis le Jeune, makes a pilgrimage to the tomb of Becket, and this in the lifetime of Henry the Second. On his return, he has his son crowned at Rheims, and the English monarch assists at the ceremony as Duke of Normandy. Instances, these, of the peculiar nature of the two great characteristics of the age, superstition and the feudal system.

The next reign opens with the efforts of Philip Augustus to repress the outrages of the barons; but he himself falls upon the Jews, and announces to his subjects, that they are to be exonerated from all Jewish claims, on paying one fifth of their debt to the royal treasury: such was the general ignorance and neglect of all the



principles of order and justice. Twenty years afterwards we see an ordinance in *favor* of the Jews: a still stronger mark of the wretched state of commerce; for from these two instances it is clear, that, abominated as the Jews were, the French were so ignorant of commerce, as to be unable to do without them; and, merciless and unjust as were the French, the Jews were contented to endure every thing from them, because they could derive so much pecuniary advantage from them.

Louis the Eighth, by his will, after declaring his eldest son king, gives Artois to his second son, Poitou to his third, Anjou and Maine to his fourth; this was two centuries and a half after Hugh Capet. The power of the crown had still to struggle with great disadvantages, if its domains could thus be dispersed by the sovereign, at his death, among the youngest branches of his family.

Louis the Ninth, the first prince of his age, made it a point to buy the crown of thorns, which had been placed on the Saviour, from the Venetians, and different relics from the crusaders. The same prince finds it necessary to publish an ordinance to prevent any son from avenging the murder of his father within forty days. Superstition and violence were, therefore, still the characteristics of the age; and an age of devotion, as the devotion was blind and ceremonial, was still left to be an age of crimes.

Philip le Hardi, his successor, ennobles one of his tradesmen; the commercial interest was therefore now advancing. This was three centuries after Hugh Capet.

In Philip le Bel's reign were enacted various sumptuary laws: an indication that the great and affluent were spending their revenue on themselves, and therefore insensibly encouraging commerce. But we have also various ordinances against usury: an indication that the profits of money were high, and therefore that commerce was still in its infancy.

Louis Hutin, his successor, in 1315, passes an ordinance to secure the serfs from being distressed in their persons, goods, instruments of agriculture, &c.; soon after, he obliges the serfs to purchase their liberty by selling their movables: indications, these, how degraded had been their condition, but that their condition was on the whole improving.

In 1318, the Duke of Brittany obtains letters of remission from Philip le Long for not having attended his coronation: an indication that the power of the crown was now in France advanced and acknowledged; for Brittany was at that time one of the most powerful and independent fiefs remaining.

During the six years of Charles le Bel, from 1322 to 1328, the relics of the chapel royal still accompanied the king, whenever he left Paris, to celebrate the four great festivals of the year; religion, therefore, still consisted not a little in vain ceremonials.

Incidents of this sort mark the character of the times in which they appear. The Abridgment of the President Hénault, from which they are taken, is too concise, and, above all, gives little information respecting the constitution of France ; and the student must, on that account, be more attentive to every particular that is noted. Millot is better.

The appendixes of Hume afford a very striking display of the manner in which the characteristics of a particular reign or period may be selected and explained by a diligent and discerning historian. In this manner I have endeavoured to illustrate my meaning, when I recommended that particular incidents in the account of Hénault, or Millot, or D'Anquetil, should be fixed upon as characteristics of the times, and made subjects of reflection.

I proceed now to give a few specimens of such subjects as are also mentioned by Hénault, which may, I think, be of sufficient importance to deserve further consideration in other authors, more particularly in the valuable and very detailed history of Velly, and in the philosophic work of Mably. For instance : —

1st. The establishments of Louis the Ninth, or St. Louis. These are very deserving attention ; they exhibit the efforts that were made by the most amiable and revered monarch of his time to improve the jurisprudence of his age. Montesquieu may be consulted. There is a full account given of them by Velly.

The chief object of St. Louis seems to have been to prepare his people for the adjustment of their quarrels, not by private combat, but by the decisions of law, after an examination of witnesses. At the same time it must be observed, that most of the great objects of civil and penal jurisprudence appear to have occupied his attention, and it is not very possible now to understand all the meaning, and therefore all the merit, of his provisions ; but the great design of the whole must have been to soften and modify the jurisprudence of the baronial courts, and to place the whole within the reach of improvement, by opening the way to the paramount jurisdiction of the courts of the sovereign.

France, in the time of St. Louis, was divided into the country under the king's obedience, and the country under the obedience of the great barons. It was not possible for St. Louis to embody his own opinions of equity and law, and then enforce a new system of jurisprudence. He attempted to reform existing systems, by introducing one more improved within his own dependencies, and holding it up to the observation of the other parts of the kingdom. He seems everywhere to struggle with difficulties, to modify and to balance, to capitulate with the evils which he could not remove, — evils on which, by any other conduct, he could have made no impression. Such must ever be the true reformer ; ardor may animate his mind, but patience must be his virtue. The true reformer is the philosopher who sup-



poses no wonders in himself and expects them not in others, and is rather the sower who goes forth to sow his seed, than the lord who comes to gather into barns. The result was what might have been expected; the labors of St. Louis were successful, and he exhibited the great criterion of genius, that of advancing his countrymen in improvement a step beyond the point at which he found them.

Again, and as another specimen of subjects to be further considered. The reign of Philip le Bel is remarkable for the struggle between the Pope and the king, and still more for the first assembly of the States-General, summoned by this prince for his defence and justification, but which must, however, not be confounded or thought the same with the national assemblies in the times of Charlemagne. These events are very important, and may be considered in Velly. The commons formed a distinct part of this assembly, and they took their share in animating the king to defend the rights of his kingdom; but their language spoke an infant power, and breathed no longer the independent fierceness of the soldier who resisted Clovis. "Be pleased," they said, "to guard the sovereign freedom of your kingdom; for in temporal matters the king can acknowledge no sovereign on earth but God alone." "We own no superior in temporals but the king," said the nobles. The clergy hesitated, but at last confessed their duty to their temporal sovereign. The failure of such a Pope as Boniface, on this occasion, shows clearly that the power of the see had already, in 1303, passed its meridian.

Again, 3dly. The French Parliaments are a proper subject of inquiry. Philip proposed to make the Parliaments, or courts of justice, stationary; this afterwards took place. The account given by Velly should be consulted. The student is, no doubt, aware that the dispensers of justice should be few in number, and neither be removed nor advanced at the mere pleasure of the executive power,—that is, be exposed neither to be corrupted nor terrified. You will do well to observe the changes that took place with respect to this part of the French constitution, a part so important to the happiness of every community. Indeed, one of the great subjects of this early period of modern history is the constitution of France, or rather, the fortunes of the constitution of France. These you will best understand, and, indeed, can understand only, by meditating the work of the Abbé de Mably. His work exhibits the philosophy of the French history. I ought to speak of it in terms of the utmost gratitude; and I must repeat to you, that I do no more than mention this great subject of the constitution of France, and this masterly treatise on its changes and fortunes, that I may impress upon you more strongly, or rather, as far as I am able to do it, impose upon you more completely, the necessity of reading the work for yourselves.

I must now make a pause. I must consider myself as having passed through the first and most repulsive portion of modern history.



have not been able to do more than allude to and recommend subjects and books that have employed the lives of men of learning and reflection. But the whole of the period may, I hope, be estimated in a general and even satisfactory manner, either on a more confined scale or a larger, by fixing the attention upon the points and the books I have mentioned. I say a confined scale or a larger, for I have exhibited both to you.

And now that we have to take our leave of the Dark Ages, I cannot but make one effort more to recommend them to your attention and study.

The great conclusions to be drawn from these Dark Ages are, as I conceive,—First, that civil liberty cannot result, in the first instance, from the rude, natural liberty of barbarous warriors. Again, that religion, in like manner, cannot consist with uncivilized ignorance. The power of the sword and of superstition, of the military chief and of the priest (of the priest in the unfavorable sense of the term), must at first follow, and may continue for ages.

But, in the next place, the great lesson which the Dark Ages exhibit is also that which human life is unhappily at every moment and on every occasion exhibiting,—the abuse of power.

The great characteristics of the Dark Ages are the feudal system and the Papal power. But consider each; the incidents, as they are termed, of the feudal system,—that is, the practices that obtained under the feudal system; and, again, the doctrines and the decrees of the Papal see. Outrageous as many of these may seem, they were still but specimens of the abuse of power.

The Dark Ages show human nature under its most unfavorable aspects, but it is still human nature. We see in them the picture of our ancestors, but it is only a more harsh and repulsive portrait of ourselves.

Observe, for instance, the Feudal System, its origin, its results. Among a set of independent warriors, the distinctions of the weak and the strong naturally arose, the leader and the follower, the military chief and the dependant. Society necessarily fell into little knots and divisions; in the absence of all central government, of all more regular paramount authority, each military chief in extensive conquered countries necessarily became a petty sovereign,—the petty sovereign a despot. When lands were once received on the general principle of homage, the natural course of the abuse of power was inevitable; the incidents, that is, the oppressions, of the feudal system followed; but for all these disgusting specimens of legal outrage and licensed wrong a sort of reason may always be found to have existed, when the incident is traced up to its first elements and original introduction.

Consider, in like manner, the Ecclesiastical Power. The priests of the Dark Ages proceeded only, as did the barons, with the same

unchecked and therefore insatiable selfishness, to subjugate every thing to their will. The ecclesiastical tyrants, like the civil tyrants, only converted the existing situation of mankind and the genuine principles of human nature to their own gratification and aggrandizement. That they should attempt to do so is not wonderful, nor is it wonderful that they succeeded.

Our Barbarian ancestors, ignorant themselves, confided in men whom they considered as wise and learned, and who, comparatively, were wise and learned. This was natural; it was even reasonable; they had no other resource but to confide, and they had no means of learning how to measure their confidence.

It should not be forgotten that the distinguishing doctrines of the Roman Catholic communion were all addressed to the most established feelings of the human heart,—absolution, confession, prayers for the dead, penance, purgatory; their rites and ceremonies not less so; not to mention that their tenets were and are still fortified by texts more numerous, and even more weighty (I do not say conclusive), than we of the Protestant communion are now in the habit of condescending to consider or even to know. The great doctrine of all, the paramount authority of the Pope, as the genuine successor of St. Peter, was always supported, when necessary, by the words of our Saviour, to that apostle; and even his infallibility was sufficiently proved to our rude ancestors by the obvious argument, that Christ would not leave his Church without a guide, to whom recourse might be had under all those difficulties which must necessarily arise among the contradictory views of contending sects; in a word, those doctrines of the Roman Catholic communion, which, at a very late period, could subdue for a time even the learning and understanding of a Chillingworth, may readily be supposed to have obtained an easy victory over the unlettered soldiers of the Dark Ages.

Whatever may be said of the thoughtlessness of mankind amid the occupations of civilized life, their apprehensions for the future are unceasing, the moment that the great truth of their immortality is properly announced to them in their ruder state. These apprehensions, in themselves so just and natural in every period of society, when united to ignorance so great as that which existed in Europe at this particular period, produced effects which *at first sight* may appear, but cannot *on reflection* appear, astonishing. The most fierce and savage soldier became docile and submissive; the most powerful monarch trembled in secret on his throne, and found his knights and his vassals a pageant and a show.

But the single terror of excommunication, and all the preparatory processes of spiritual punishment, were perfectly adequate to produce these intellectual and political wonders. No one in our own happier times can form an idea of what was then a sentence of ex-



communication. It was to live alone in the midst of society, to be no longer human, to be without the character of man here, and to be without hope hereafter. The clergy of the Dark Ages (to adopt, *in part*, the striking illustration of Hume; suggested, indeed, by a passage in Dryden's "Sebastian"),—the clergy of the Dark Ages had obtained what alone Archimedes wanted; they had got another world on which to rest their engines, and they moved this world at their pleasure.

The Inquisition itself had its origin in the most acknowledged feelings of our nature. Its advocates and its ministers could always appeal, in its support, to the most regular conclusions of the human mind. The reasoning was then, as it would be now to the generality of mankind, perfectly intelligible and convincing. Truth, it was said, could be only on one side; by error we may destroy our own souls and those of others. Error must therefore be prevented, and if not by gentle means, on account of the greatness of the object, by other means, by any means, by force. This is the creed of intolerance to this hour. The tribunal that appeared with all its tremendous apparatus of familiars, inquisitors, and executioners, was but a consequence which, in an unenlightened period, followed of course.

The great and only difficult victory of the Papal see was over the clergy themselves,—the law of celibacy. When this triumph, that had been long in preparation, was once obtained by the renowned Gregory the Seventh, towards the close of the eleventh century, the ecclesiastics then became a sort of regular army, with a dictator at their head, to which nothing could be successfully opposed.

But even this, the most extraordinary phenomenon of the whole, may still be traced up, as well as the existence of the various monastic orders, with all their extravagant and, at first sight, unnatural observances, to principles that are, notwithstanding, the genuine principles of the human heart, and inseparable from our nature. The *esprit du corps*,—the merit of the severer virtues, of self-denial, of self-abasement,—these, united with the religious principle, gave occasion to the monastic character and all its observances, and they form at once a solution of all these outrageous deviations from the more calm and ordinary suggestions of the common sense and common feelings of mankind.

Observances of this kind have, in fact, existed among the nations of every clime and age; they exist in India at this moment. But consider the principles we have mentioned. This *esprit du corps* is founded on the sympathies, on some of the most effective sympathies, of the human mind; and the severer virtues of self-control, of self-denial, of self-abasement, of chastity, and again the virtues of humility and of piety, are all virtues in themselves so awful and respectable, that they have always, even in their excesses, received the admiration of mankind, and they are the highest and the best



praise of man, when well directed and attempered;—that they should not be so in times of ignorance can be matter of no surprise; these are subjects which are often misunderstood, even among ourselves.

Pursue the same train of reasoning to the less fatal, less degrading, extravagances of this dark period,—the institution of Chivalry, for instance,—the expeditions to the Holy Land.

Chivalry, if considered in its original elements, is only a very striking testimony to those more generous principles of the human heart which, it should seem, can never be separated from our nature. under any, the most disorderly, state of society. The same testimony seems to have been offered in times the most remote. The knights of the Middle Ages were not a little the counterparts, however improved, of the fabled gods and heroes of antiquity, of Hercules and Theseus; and have been celebrated in the same romantic manner. They were the redressers of oppression; the moral benefactors of the community in which they lived; the mirrors of the noblest qualities of the human character; the exhibitors of those two great virtues of tenderness and courage, which were then so peculiarly necessary to society. The foundations of the chivalrous character were laid in human nature, in the consciousness that belongs to good actions, and in that sensibility to the applause of others, from which those who can really perform good actions neither can nor need be exempt.

Original principles like these could easily be associated in a religious age with the religious principle, more especially with Christianity, the religion of benevolence,—the religion which, of all others, teaches us to think most of those around us, and least of ourselves.

The only part of the chivalrous character which it is somewhat difficult to account for is that delicate devotion to the fair sex, by which it was so strongly and often so whimsically distinguished.

This devotion must be traced up to the woods of Germany; where, however it may be explained, it appears from Tacitus that the other sex had even more than their natural share of importance and respect. This natural importance and respect could not but be materially strengthened and improved subsequently by the influence of the Christian religion, which still existed amidst the confusions of Europe, and survived them. This religion could not but have made the weaker sex more worthy of the estimation of the stronger, and the stronger, in its turn, more fitted to comprehend and relish the more gentle virtues of the weaker.

The subsequent state of society, where the great families lived often in a state of separation and hostility, must have interposed those difficulties to the gratification of the sexual passion which have such a remarkable tendency to soften and refine it. Even in civilized life we see this passion so affected by difficulties, as some-

times to be sublimed into extravagances as wild as those of the Middle Ages, as preposterous as were ever exhibited by those who maintained by arms the beauty of their mistresses against all comers.

Humanity and courage are the virtues which the softer sex must from their very nature be always most disposed to patronize. The knight and his lady were thus formed in their characters for each other. Jousts and tournaments still further contributed to animate all the natural sentiments with which both were inspired; and these trials of skill and spectacles of magnificence were the necessary exhibitions of the merits of both, — of beauty on the one side, and military prowess on the other; and were the obvious resources of those who must otherwise have been without occupation and amusement, and whose minds could not at that period be diversified by all the intellectual pursuits of modern and more civilized life.

On the whole, there was in chivalry much which the natural ardor and enthusiasm of the human character might convert into the extravagant, and sometimes into the ridiculous, and in this state it might be seized upon by a man of genius, like Cervantes, and, when arrayed in the colors of his own pleasantry and fancy, be transmitted to the amusement of posterity; but the virtues of the knight, of the hero of chivalry, were real and substantial virtues. Courtesy to the low, respect to the high, tenderness to the softer sex and loyalty to the prince, courage and piety, gentleness and modesty, veracity and frankness, — these, after all, are the virtues of the human character; and whatever appearances they might assume under the particular circumstances of these ages, they are still the proper objects of the love and respect of mankind under every circumstance and in every age.

The knights, it must be confessed, received an education that was too military to be favorable to knowledge; they were not the scholars or the men of science of their day, but they contributed, notwithstanding, to elevate and to humanize the times in which they lived, and they transmitted, and they indeed thoroughly engrafted upon the European character, the generous and manly virtues.

Lastly, to take the other specimen, which we have mentioned, of these Middle Ages, — the Crusades. These are, according to Mr. Hume, the most durable monuments of human folly. It may be so; but whatever may have been the less worthy motives that contributed to carry such myriads to the Holy Land, no warriors would have reached it, if a piety, however unenlightened, if a military spirit, however rude, that is, if devotion and courage, had not been the great actuating principles of the age. But courage and devotion are still virtues, however unfortunately exercised; the difference between these crusaders and ourselves is still only that of a more intelligent faith in us, and better regulated feelings. Piety and magnanimity are still our virtues, as they were theirs.



The crusaders, indeed, were inflamed by the images of the Holy Land; for they saw, and they were overpowered with indignation when they saw, the sacred earth, which had been blessed by the footsteps of our Saviour, profaned by the tread of Barbarians, who rejected his faith, and outraged his pious and unoffending followers: but in this the crusaders submitted only to the associations of their nature. The same power of association is still the great salutary law by which we, too, are animated or subdued, by which we, too, are hurried into action or moulded into habit; and it is as impossible for us now, as it was to the crusaders of the Middle Ages, to behold without affection and reverence whatever has been once connected with objects that are dear and venerable in our eyes.

It is thus that things, in themselves the most inanimate, are every day seen to assume almost the nature of life and existence. Is there at Runnymede, for instance, to be found nothing more than the beauty of the scene? Do we walk without emotion amidst the ruins of ancient Rome? Is Palestine a land, and Jerusalem a city, like a common land and a common city? Far different is the answer which Nature has unalterably given to appeals of this kind in every climate and in every heart. And if, indeed, the sepulchre in which our Saviour was inurned, if, indeed, the cross on which he expired, could be presented to our eyes, — if we could indeed believe that such were in truth the objects actually exhibited to our view, — assuredly, we should sink in reverence, as did our forefathers, before such affecting images of the past; assuredly, with the Sufferer himself we should identify these visible instruments of his sufferings; and the sacrifice of our hearts would be, not the idolatry of blindness, but the natural effusion of irresistible devotion and awe.

It is not the sentiments by which these heroes were impelled that we can bear to censure; it is the excess to which they were carried; it is the direction which they took; it is piety preposterously exercised; it is courage unlawfully employed; the extravagances to which virtue and religion may be made subservient, not virtue and religion.

So natural, indeed, are such sacred principles, so attractive, so respectable even in their excesses, that we willingly allow to our imagination the facility which it loves, of moulding into visions of sublimity and beauty the forms and the scenes which time has now removed within its softened twilight, and in some respects secured from the intrusions of our colder reason. Who is there that can entirely escape from the delusion and the charm of Pilgrims gray and Red-cross Knights, the fights of Ascalon and the siege of Acre, the prowess and the renown of our lion-hearted Richard? It is by an effort, an unwilling effort, that we turn to think of the bloodshed and desolation, the disease and famine, the pain and death, by which these unhappy enterprises were accompanied.

Little need be said of the custom of Duelling by which these ages



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were so distinguished. The custom is founded too evidently on some of the most powerful principles of our nature, particularly that of resentment, — given us for the wisest purposes, and necessary to our well-being, but, of all others, the principle that has been most abused by the folly of mankind. The practice has even descended to our own times, though we have no longer the reasons or the excuse which our forefathers had for such nefarious or ridiculous or misguided excesses of just and honorable sentiment. In the absence of all general law, men were in former times naturally a law unto themselves. These appeals, too, were considered at that period as appeals to Heaven. There was here something of necessity, something of reasonableness. With respect to ourselves, on the contrary, experience has taught us no longer to expect these extraordinary interpositions to defend the right; a more enlarged philosophy has served to show us the impropriety of supposing that the general laws of the Creator should be continually suspended for the adjustment of our quarrels, or that the rewards and punishments which are to await innocence and guilt hereafter should be regularly expected and realized in our present state. But customs remain, when the reasons of them have ceased. In the midst of our lawyers, our sages, and our divines, we violate every precept of law, morality, and religion; in the midst of civilization, improvement, and social happiness, we suffer our comforts and our peace, here and hereafter, to hang upon the chance of an angry look or word; and we retain the preposterous folly, while we have lost the ignorance, — the bloody ferocity, but no longer the humble piety, of our ancestors.

It is thus that the history of the Dark and Middle Ages, like every other part of history, is still but a representation of human nature, and, as such, deserving of our curiosity and examination.

The poet may, no doubt, find the richest materials amid transactions where the passions were so violently excited, and in a period when human manners were cast into forms so striking and so different from our own; and the antiquarian, the constitutional lawyer, and the philosopher must find, amid the opinions and practices of these illiterate Barbarians, the origin and foundation of the laws, the sentiments, and the customs that distinguish Europe from the other quarters of the world, and the different kingdoms of Europe from each other. But to the moralist and the statesman the great reflection is everywhere the same: the deplorable nature of ignorance; the value of every thing which can enlighten mankind; the merit of every man who can contribute to open the views or strengthen the understanding of his fellow-creatures. It is but too evident, from the history of these periods of darkness, that we have only to suppose a state of society where the general ignorance shall be sufficiently complete, and impossibilities themselves seem realized; men may find degradation in the most ennobling sentiments of their nature, and destruction and crimes in their best virtues.

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## LECTURE V.

### ENGLAND.

I HAVE hitherto said nothing of England. Yet has England a dearer claim on our curiosity and attention, and its history, and more particularly its constitutional history, must be considered with more diligence and patience, than can possibly be directed to those of any other country.

The first authentic notice which we have of the inhabitants of this island is honorable to their memory: they were attacked by the first man of the first nation then in the world; they resisted, and were not subdued. The account is given by Cæsar himself; and what Cæsar delivers to posterity, however short, cannot but be deserving of our observation.

Further information with respect to the Britons may be afterwards collected from Suetonius; and the gradual successes of the Roman commanders will be found in Tacitus. In his *Life of Agricola* the subject is closed; all further contest is at an end. But the speech which is there attributed to Galgacus, when once read, can never be forgotten: the great historian has here displayed the rare merit of a mind elevated in the cause of justice above every domestic partiality and national prejudice. When he exhibits the cause which called the Caledonians to the field, he is no longer the son-in-law of the Roman general, nor the countryman of the Roman people; he is the assertor of all the generous principles of our nature; he is the protector of humanity; and he discharges with fidelity and spirit the noble office, the great duty, of the historian, by exhibiting to our sympathy the wrongs of unoffending freedom. The Romans were, indeed, successful, and the independence of Britain was no more. But the sentiments which must have animated these last defenders of their country still breathe in the immortal pages of this celebrated writer; and the virtues of the Caledonians are now for ever united to the taste and feelings of mankind.

Another melancholy scene succeeds. The Romans retire from the island, and the Britons, deprived of their protection, are insulted and overpowered by every invader. The Romans had long inured them to a sense of inferiority. The country had been partly civilized and improved, but the *mind* of the country had been destroyed. The Britons had lost the rude virtues of barbarians, but had not acquired that sense of honor and consciousness of political happiness which do more than supply their place in the character of civilized man. They had not felt the influence of a government which themselves could



share. They were unable to make head against their enemies ; and they exhibited to the world that lesson, which has been so often repeated, that a country can never be defended by a population that has been, on whatever account, degraded ; that they who are to resist an invader must first be moulded, by equal laws and the benefits of a free government, into a due sense of national pride and individual importance ; and that men cannot be formed into heroes on the principles of suspicion and injustice.

It is true, that the Britons made a better resistance to their invaders than could have been expected. There may be much exaggeration and vain lamentation, as Mr. Turner supposes, in the representations of Gildas, on which Bede, and after him our historian Hume, relied ; but the independence of the island must at last have been lost, from the destructive effect of such general principles as I have stated.

The next era in our history exhibits the total subjugation of Britain by the Angles, Jutes, and Saxons. These were northern nations ; and we are thus brought, with respect to England, exactly to the same point from which we set out in examining the history of Europe, — the conquest of the northern nations.

Again, we must observe the particular circumstances of the Norman Conquest which followed. This conquest gave occasion to the establishment of the feudal system in all its rigors. The Pope had also extended his empire to this remote island. So that in England, as in the rest of Europe, we have the feudal system and the Papal power ; and these were, in the instance of our own country, as in the rest of Europe, (without stopping to notice some fortunate peculiarities in our case, or some advantages concomitant with these evils,) the great impediments to the improvement of human happiness.

The subject of English history now lies before us, from the expulsion of the Romans to the time of Henry the Eighth. I cannot occupy you in listening here to such information as I might collect for you from books. You must read the books. I will observe, upon them, and upon the subject before us ; but I can do no more. The whole subject may be evidently distinguished into two great divisions : — the fate and fortunes of the different monarchs, barons, and remarkable men that appear in our annals ; and the fate and fortunes of the constitution of England. The latter is the great subject for you to study. The first, indeed, you ought to know and may readily know, but the second not so readily ; the former is of importance chiefly as connected with the latter. In a word, there are before you the facts of the history, and the philosophy of the history. You will soon learn the one, but you must endeavour to understand the other.

Having thus given you my general notion of what you are to attempt to do, I will describe to you the best and shortest means you



can use for the purpose. You must read, then, and compare Hume and Rapin, and study Millar on the English Constitution. Bear away, then, this general impression from this lecture, — that it is the constitutional history of your country which is the great subject before you, and that Hume, Rapin, and Millar are to be your authors; that the subject cannot be contracted for you into any shorter compass than this. But to these, which I originally mentioned, I must now add the invaluable History of Mr. Hallam, and that no one who has been admitted to the benefits of a regular education can be pardoned, if he do not exert himself at least to this extent. But when England is the subject, most of you may be disposed to take any pains that can be thought necessary, to inform yourselves of its constitutional history; and it is to those, therefore, that I shall now, for some time, address myself, — to those who are ready to study the constitutional history of their country more thoroughly.

In the first place, then, Priestley's Lectures and Nicholson's Historical Library will give you an account of all books and sources of information belonging to English history.

Of the Saxon law what now can be known has been collected by different antiquarians, and edited more particularly by Wilkins. You may also estimate this part of the subject from the first appendix of Hume. This appendix will be sufficient for the general reader.

Mr. Turner has published some volumes containing many particulars which the student will not readily find elsewhere, and he will, from the text and from the notes, sufficiently comprehend what is the knowledge which the study of the Saxon language and Saxon antiquities would furnish him with.

Mr. Turner is often capable of affording his reader valuable topics of reflection; but, though apparently a most patient antiquarian, his imagination is so active, that his style is unexpectedly loaded with metaphors, to a degree that is not only inconsistent with historic composition, but with *all* composition. Very extensive reading is displayed; and, on the whole, the work may be consulted with advantage. There is nothing said of the laws of Edward the Confessor, a strange omission; nor of the rise of the English House of Commons, though Mr. Turner evidently conceives that the commons formed no part of the Witenagemote.

Mr. Turner has, since I wrote this paragraph, published three quarto volumes on the English history, from William the First to Henry the Eighth. He is an antiquarian, as I have mentioned, and whatever a man who looks into original records publishes must be of more or less importance. Mr. Turner often gives his reader the impression of an amiable man, rather than one of a very superior understanding; yet many curious particulars may be collected and much instruction may be derived from his learned and often amusing work.

This lecture was drawn up many years ago, in the years 1807 and 1808. I have now, therefore, to mention to you also the eighth chapter of Mr. Hallam's work on the Middle Ages. This chapter refers entirely to the English constitution, into the history of which it enters with great learning and ability. You must come to no decision on any point connected with this subject, without first turning to this chapter of Mr. Hallam. He thinks for himself; and he is a critic and examiner of the labors of those who have gone before. Since this lecture was written, his *Constitutional History* has also appeared; a work, as I have already said, quite invaluable.

Dr. Lingard has lately published a *History of England*; and we have now, therefore, the views and reasonings of those who are members of the Roman Catholic communion, presented to us by a writer of great controversial ability. Dr. Lingard also consults records, and judges for himself, and his book must therefore be always referred to on every occasion of importance. He tells the story of England in too cold a manner, and it is truly the Roman Catholic history of England; but his work is interesting, because the reader knows that the writer is not only an able writer, but a man of research and of antiquarian learning, and it therefore never can be conjectured beforehand what may be the information which he will produce or the sentiments that he will adopt. He sometimes differs with his predecessors, even on general subjects, and not always with good reason.

I must now, however, mention to you the three octavo volumes on English history that were drawn up by Sir James Mackintosh, for Dr. Lardner. There is little pretension in the appearance of these volumes. Do not be deceived by this circumstance; they are full of weighty matter, and are everywhere marked by paragraphs of comprehensive thought and sound philosophy, political and moral; they are well worthy their distinguished author. The sentences are now and then overcharged with reflection, so as to become obscure, particularly in the first volume. But do not be deterred by a fault that too naturally resulted from the richly stored and highly metaphysical mind of this valuable writer.

You may easily consult the monkish writers; you will find them edited in a form by no means repulsive: "*Rerum Anglicarum Scriptores Decem*," &c. You will not probably turn to read works of this kind in any very regular manner; but I would advise you to consult them at particular periods of our history, periods when their representations are likely to be instructive, — when popular commotions, for instance, occur, — changes of the government, — any transaction that may be connected with general principles. You may remember with what effect an allusion is made to the old historians, Knighton and Walsingham, by Mr. Burke, when he meant to show that all the modern principles of the revolutionary school of France were but of the same nature with the vulgar jargon of John Ball in the reign of



Richard the Second. I allude to his note in the Appeal from the New to the Old Whigs.

A good notion of the early constitutional history of England may be collected from Cotton's Abridgment of the Records, which ought by all means to be consulted; it has been edited by Prynne, whose preface should be perused. The reader is furnished with an index at the end, which will point out to him a variety of topics well fitted to excite his curiosity; and he may thus acquire, by pursuing the references, most of the benefit which the book can render him, in a very easy and expeditious manner. It is not, however, always a sufficient representation of the records, which it, indeed, only professes to abridge.

It is to be observed, that records are consulted often to determine points of difficulty; abridgments cannot then be satisfactory. Cotton is censured as inadequate, sometimes as inaccurate; but the work is an abridgment. Omission is not necessarily inaccuracy, though it has always a tendency to be so, and may sometimes operate as if it were. Cotton is, of course, no authority in Westminster Hall or Parliament.

Brady's History, Tyrrell's, and Carte's may be consulted, and the Parliamentary History; but as the latter work, and the proper continuations of it, are not always, at least not cheaply, to be procured, you may refer to a very adequate selection from them, that has been published by Cobbett, or rather by Hansard, and that forms the volumes of his Parliamentary History; the preface to each of which volumes will always afford the reader all the necessary information respecting such original works as can now be resorted to.

It is totally impossible to convey the impression which is given by these original documents in any words but their own. Nothing can be more curious and striking than their language to our modern ears, particularly where the Commons are mentioned. When we consider what, very happily for the community, that assembly now is, it is perfectly amusing to observe the submissive approaches which they long made, not only to the king, but to the lords and prelates, — their alarm, their total despondency, when they see any tax impending over them.

It is in these original documents, that their early insignificance, and the slow, but accelerated, growth of their power, can best be seen; and how idle is the declamation which would refer us to these times, as the best times of our Parliaments. Most of the valuable privileges which the House of Commons enjoys, most of the important offices which that house now discharges for the community, may be there traced up to all their rude beginnings; visible sometimes in the shape of pretensions and assumptions, — sometimes of claims and rights, — and all or any of them, with the exception of the right to give away their own and the public money, waived, or asserted, or modified,



according to the circumstances of their situation. So much has liberty owed to perseverance, and to the vigilant improvement of opportunity; not to any original contract or adjustment between the elementary powers of the constitution, the monarch, the aristocracy, and the commonalty.

Much of this sort of information, and of every other historical information, may be found in the History of Dr. Henry; but the same facts, when collected and printed in a modern dress, properly arranged, and to be read without difficulty, as they are in the work of Dr. Henry, no longer excite the same reflection, nor obtain the same possession of the memory, which they do, when seen in something like their native garb, in their proper place, and in all the simplicity, singularity, and quaintness which belong to them.

I do not say that there will be no labor in referring to original authorities, but I say that the labor will be rewarded; and that, unless such diligence be exercised, no conclusion can safely be drawn, in any particular case, from the supposed facts of our constitutional history. And this is the more necessary, because, from the very nature of a mixed government and the very nature of the human mind, historians and philosophers are affected by different feelings, and give different representations of the same periods; and every student must refer to authorities and judge for himself.

Turn, for instance, to the History of Hume. We are scarcely entered upon the work and referred to the notes, before we see the symptoms of some contrariety of opinion between the historian and other writers, with respect to the original nature of our constitution. If we have recourse to the authors whom he quotes or alludes to, the shades of controversy soon thicken around us, and we perceive that the same dispute exists among our own writers that will be found among the historians and antiquarians of the French nation, — between those who insist upon the popular, and those who contend for the aristocratic and monarchical, nature of the original constitutions and governments of Europe.

Controversies of this kind have arisen, not only from the curious and disputable nature of these topics, but from a difference of sentiment which has always existed among the writers and reasoners that have lived under the mixed governments of Europe. Secretly or avowedly, they have always fallen into two divisions, — those who think the interests of the community are best served by favoring the monarchical part of a constitution, and those who think the same end is best attained by inclining to its popular privileges. The result has been, that writers of the first description have been eager to show that the prerogatives of the monarch were from the earliest times predominant; and that those of the last description have been equally earnest to prove that all power, not only in theory, but in fact, was first derived from the people.

Such discussions may be thought by many little more than the natural, though unimportant, occupation of speculative writers and antiquarians; for the real question, it will be said, must always be, by what form of government the happiness of the community is best secured, — not what was in fact the form that happened to exist among our ancestors a thousand years ago; their mistakes or misfortunes can be no rule or obligation to us; we may emulate or avoid their example, but cannot be bound by their authority.

All this must be admitted, yet it must be remembered that the affairs of men are not disposed of by the rules of logic or the abstract truths of reasoning; these may remain the same, and may always exhibit to the monarch and to the people, to the courtier and the patriot, those principles and maxims which are best fitted to promote the happiness of the community. Neither the one nor the other is, however, likely to see such truths very clearly, or to examine them very accurately. It is by a certain loose and coarse mixture of right and wrong in the reasoning, and of selfishness and generosity in the intention, that the *practical* politics of mankind are carried on, according to the varying circumstances of the case; not only, therefore, are the reasonings of philosophy produced, but arguments are urged, drawn from precedent and ancient usage, which thus appear to moderate, as it were, between the contending parties, and to be unaffected by the heats and prejudices of the moment. It seems, for example, more reasonable to insist upon privileges which have been *before* enjoyed, more reasonable to maintain prerogatives which were *originally* exercised. Topics of this nature, which can in no respect be slighted by any sound philosopher, — much the contrary, — are perfectly adapted to the loose, sweeping, and often irrational decisions of the generality of mankind; and therefore the discussions of antiquarians and philosophic historians, with respect to the original state of prerogative and privilege, can never be without their interest and importance. In the practical politics of mankind, usage, prescription, custom, are every thing, or nearly so; but, in this country, such discussions are fitted to excite a more than ordinary degree of interest. The language of the statesmen and patriots to whom we are so much indebted for our constitution has always been, that they claimed their undoubted rights and privileges, their ancient franchises, the laws and liberties of the land, and their immemorial customs. One monarch has been obliged to capitulate with his subjects, and acknowledge their immunities and franchises formally by charter; one has perished on a scaffold; another been exiled from the throne. Revolutions and a civil war have marked the influence of opposite opinions with respect to the popular nature of our constitution. These dreadful and perilous scenes could not fail to transmit this original division of sentiment to us, their posterity. The distinction between those who in-



cline to the popular part of the constitution and those who incline to the monarchical exists to this hour, and can cease only with the constitution itself.

The great leading idea which should be formed of our constitutional history is, that there has always been a constant struggle between prerogative and privilege.

Open, for instance, a volume of Hume, in any reign after the House of Commons had obtained an existence, — any extract may serve as a specimen of the whole, — it will instantly be seen that the points at issue between the crown and the subject were *always* nearly the same (precisely the same in principle), from the earliest struggles of the barons, down to the Revolution in 1688.

Take, for example, a paragraph in his reign of Edward the Third, page 490, 8vo: — “They mistake, indeed, very much,” says he, “the genius of this reign [of Edward the Third], who imagine that it was not extremely arbitrary. All the high prerogatives of the crown were to the full exerted in it; but, what gave some consolation and promised in time some relief to the people, they were always complained of by the Commons: such as the dispensing power, the extension of the forests, erecting monopolies, exacting loans, stopping justice by particular warrants, the renewal of the commission of *trailbaston*, pressing men and ships into the public service, levying arbitrary and exorbitant fines, extending the authority of the Privy Council or Star-Chamber to the decision of private causes, enlarging the power of the mareschal’s and other arbitrary courts, imprisoning members for freedom of speech in Parliament, obliging people, without any rule, to send recruits of men-at-arms, archers, and hobblers, to the army.”

Now, if the references of Mr. Hume are consulted, it will be found, as he asserts, that traces of such arbitrary exercises of power appear on our records. But, says Mr. Hume, “they were always complained of by the Commons.” On consulting the references, this, too, will be found to be the case. And here, then, we have before us a picture of the whole subject, — a continued struggle between prerogative and privilege, and of the same nature in the reign of Edward the Third as afterwards in the reign of Charles the First and even of James the Second.

Grievances like these continually occurred, from the irregular nature of government and society in such barbarous times; but the natural feelings of mankind, operating upon the example transmitted by more ancient times, continually revived the spirit of resistance. This virtuous spirit found in the House of Commons a regular and legal organ through which the rights of the community could be asserted; and this is the struggle and this the merit of our ancestors, — this the inherited duty, if necessary, of ourselves.

Now, such being the real picture of our constitutional history,



the student is, in the next place, to be reminded of what we have already stated to him, and must in the course of these lectures for ever repeat, — the natural divisions, not only of mankind, but of philosophers, on political subjects, and the manner in which they separate into two classes: those, for instance, who are anxious, first and principally, for the prerogative of the crown; and those, on the other hand, who are zealous, first and principally, for the privileges of the people.

It may be very true, that, could the selfishness and the irritability of men allow them to weigh and consider the reasonings of each other, the real interests of both crown and people would be found to consist in their mutual support, and are always in truth the same; but the rude warfare of human passions admits not of such salutary adjustments; and as mutual offences are in practice constantly given and received, men who naturally kindle at the sight of what they conceive to be insolence and usurpation on the one side, or on the other to be cruelty and wrong, are not only inflamed, when they live at the time, and are witnesses of the scene, but they are unable to give an accurate representation even of the transactions of the past; they cannot consider them with proper calmness, even when they observe them, in a subsequent period, at a secure distance of time and place. So true is this, that not one thoroughly impartial historian of our annals can be mentioned; and it is necessary to warn my hearers that they are to adopt no train of reasoning, nor even the narrative of any important proceeding, without a due examination of different writers, and a careful consideration of their particular prejudices.

Take, as specimens, the reigns of Edward the Second and Richard the Second. Let them be considered, first in Hume, and afterwards in Rapin; the reader will be impressed with the difference between the representations of the one historian and the other. Let him then turn to the account given of these reigns by Millar; the difference will be still more striking. The reign of Richard the Second, for instance, is represented by Millar as perfectly analogous to that of James the Second; a king neglecting the interests and violating the rights of his subjects, and justly deposed. In Hume, on the contrary, we see only the picture of a prince unfitted to contend with a turbulent people and a factious aristocracy, and perishing by a cruel death, rather from weakness of understanding than from any malignity of disposition.

The discordant observations of these two distinguished philosophers, when viewing the same actors and events at the distance of four centuries, sufficiently exemplify that division of sentiment which has been described as existing more or less among all political reasoners on similar occasions. Throughout all our history it may be observed, that all violence and resistance are imputed by Hume to

faction and barbarism, by Millar and most other writers to a laudable spirit of freedom and independence.

These are the observations that I have to address to those students who are disposed to search diligently into the records of our history. But I must now turn again to the general reader, who may not have the same ardor of inquiry or patience of study.

Rapin and Hume are our two great historians. But it is Hume who is read by every one. Hume is the historian whose views and opinions insensibly become our own. He is respected and admired by the most enlightened reader; he is the guide and philosopher of the ordinary reader, to whose mind, on all the topics connected with our history, he entirely gives the tone and the law. On every account, therefore, I shall dedicate the remainder of this lecture chiefly to the consideration of his work, that your confidence may not be given too implicitly, and that while you feel, as you ought to do, the charm of his composition, the charm of what Gibbon called so justly his careless and inimitable beauties, you may be aware also of the objections that certainly exist to the general tendency and practical effect of his representations.

The two great histories which we read, as I must again observe, are those of Rapin and Hume. Their political sentiments are different; but Hume is the author who, from his conciseness, the charms of his style, and the weight of his philosophical observations, is always preferred, and is far more universally and thoroughly read.

It is impossible, indeed, that the confidence of a reader should not be won by the general air of calmness and good sense which, independent of other merits, distinguishes the beautiful narrative of Hume. If he should turn to his authorities (speaking first on the favorable side of the question), he will then, and then only, be able to perceive the entire merit of this admirable writer, — the dexterity and sagacity with which he has often made out his recital, the ease and grace with which it is presented to the reader, and the valuable and penetrating remarks by which it is enriched.

But, to speak next on the unfavorable side, by turning to the same authorities, we shall then only perceive the entire demerit of his work. It is understood, indeed, by every reader, it has been proclaimed by many writers, that Hume always inclines to the side of prerogative; that, in his account of the Stuarts, his History is little better than an apology; his pages are therefore read, in this part of his work at least, with something of distrust, and his representations are not considered as decisive. But what reader turns to consult his references or examine his original authorities? What effect does this distrust, after all, produce? Practically, none. In defiance of it, is not the general influence of his work, on the general reader, just such as the author would himself have wished, — as strong and as permanent as if every statement and opinion in his History had deserved our perfect assent and approbation?



I must confess that this appears to me so entirely the fact, judging from all that I have experienced in myself and observed in others, that I do not conceive a lecturer in history could render (could offer, at least) a more important service to an English auditory than by following Mr. Hume, step by step, through the whole of his account, and showing what are his fair, and what his unfair inferences, — what his just representations, and what his improper colorings, — what his mistakes, and, above all, what his omissions, — in short, what are the dangers, and what the advantages, that must attend the perusal of so popular and able a performance. But such lectures, I apprehend, could not be listened to. Were they even formed into a treatise, they would be only in part perused by the general reader ; nor would they be properly and thoroughly considered by any but the most patient inquirers.

I would wish, however, to make some effort of this kind, however slight and imperfect. A sort of specimen, perhaps, may be offered, — a general notion may, I hope, be given ; and as investigations of this nature are very repulsive and fatiguing, I shall fix only upon some one paragraph, the first that occurs, and examine it in all its important parts ; and, contenting myself with this example, leave my hearers to draw their own reflections, and pursue such inquiries to any further extent which they may hereafter judge expedient.

I have already quoted a paragraph from the reign of Edward the Third, to show that the nature of the contest between prerogative and privilege always turned upon the same points through the whole of our history. It may also be remembered that I have always represented the right of taxation as the most important question of all. Now the passage that immediately follows in Mr. Hume is this : —

“ But there was no act of arbitrary power more frequently repeated in this reign than that of imposing taxes without consent of Parliament. Though that assembly granted the king greater supplies than had ever been obtained by any of his predecessors, his great undertakings and the necessity of his affairs obliged him to levy still more ; and after his splendid success against France had added weight to his authority, these arbitrary impositions became almost annual and perpetual. Cotton’s Abridgment of the Records affords numerous instances of this kind, in the first year of his reign, in the thirteenth year, in the fourteenth, in the twentieth, in the twenty-first, in the twenty-second, in the twenty-fifth, in the thirty-eighth, in the fiftieth, and in the fifty-first.

“ The king openly avowed and maintained this power of levying taxes at pleasure. At one time, he replied to the remonstrance made by the Commons against it, that the impositions had been exacted from great necessity, and had been assented to by the prelates, earls, barons, and *some* of the Commons ; at another, that he would advise with his Council. When the Parliament desired that a law might be



enacted for the punishment of such as levied these arbitrary impositions, he refused compliance. In the subsequent year, they desired that the king might renounce this pretended prerogative; but his answer was, that he would levy no taxes without necessity, for the defence of the realm, and where he reasonably might use that authority. This incident passed a few days before his death, and these were, in a manner, his last words to his people. It would seem that the famous charter or statute of Edward the First, ‘*De tallagio non concedendo*,’ though never repealed, was supposed to have already lost by age all its authority.

“These facts can only show the *practice* of the times; for as to the *right*, the continual remonstrances of the Commons may seem to prove that it rather lay on their side; at least, these remonstrances served to prevent the arbitrary practices of the court from becoming an established part of the constitution.”

Now here we have, certainly, very important statements. Let my hearer observe them.

“But there was no act of arbitrary power more frequently repeated in this reign than that of imposing taxes *without* consent of Parliament.” — “These arbitrary impositions became almost annual and perpetual.” — “The king openly avowed and maintained this power of levying taxes at pleasure.” — Such are Mr. Hume’s expressions to represent the facts.

“These facts,” he continues, “can only show the practice of the times; for as to the right, the continual remonstrances of the Commons may *seem* to prove that it *rather* lay on their side.” — Such is the general air of his reasoning upon these facts.

Now it cannot be supposed that a writer like Mr. Hume will be palpably and entirely unfair either in his facts or his reasonings, yet he may be sufficiently so to give his reader an impression on the whole not so favorable to the constitutional rights of the subject as the case admits of.

The authority quoted is Cotton’s Abridgment of the Records; and on consulting the references of Mr. Hume, they will be seen to prove, as he asserts, that money was raised by the king without the authority of Parliament. This must be considered as proved by the occasional complaints of the Commons, which in the references constantly appear; but the still more important consideration is this, — what were the *answers* of the king to these complaints of the Commons? Mr. Hume’s assertion is, that “the king openly avowed and maintained this power of levying taxes at pleasure. At one time,” says Hume, “he replied to the remonstrance made by the Commons against it, ‘that the impositions had been exacted from great *necessity*, and had been *assented* to by the prelates, earls, barons, and some of the Commons.’” Now even this answer, thus given by Mr. Hume, does not justify him in the assertion, that the king openly

avowed and maintained the power of levying taxes at pleasure ; — quite the contrary ; for the king alleged, not his right, but the necessity of the case, and the *assent* of the Lords and part of the Commons. Upon looking, however, at Mr. Hume's reference in Cotton, page 53, the real answer appears to have been as follows : — “ If any such imposition be made, the same was made upon great necessity, and with the assent of the prelates, counts, barons, and other great men, and some of the Commons then present ; notwithstanding, the king wills not that such undue impositions be drawn into consequence.” These last words, “ notwithstanding,” &c. &c., are totally omitted by Mr. Hume in his representation of the king's answer ; but they are evidently very material, and entirely opposed to Mr. Hume's affirmation, that the king openly avowed and maintained this power of levying taxes at pleasure, — in so much so, that they are the very words which are always used, when a particular exception is made to a general rule, and it is thought necessary to assert and acknowledge the general rule, and leave it as it stood before. The king's answer, in every part of it, particularly in this last omitted part, implies that the right of levying money could not be regularly exercised without the Parliament.

Again. At another time, says Mr. Hume, the king replied, “ that he would advise with his Council ” ; but the real answer in the reference in Cotton, page 57, is this, — “ that the subsidy,” of which they seem to have complained, “ was *granted for a time yet enduring*, within which time the king will advise with his Council what shall be best to be done therein for the good of the people.” The first part of this answer, — “ that the subsidy *was granted* for a time *yet enduring*,” — which acknowledges the right of the Commons, is again totally omitted by Mr. Hume, and his representation is, that the king answered, “ that he would advise with his Council.”

Again. “ When the Parliament,” says Mr. Hume, “ desired that a law might be enacted for the punishment of such as levied these arbitrary impositions, he [the king] refused compliance.” Upon consulting the reference, the petition of the Commons runs thus. They petition, “ that such as shall of their own authority lay new impositions without assent of Parliament may lose life, member, and other forfeitures.” In the House of Commons this was surely a most violent and objectionable mode of asserting their right of taxation, and well deserving the resistance of the king. The answer of the king was, — “ Let the common law, heretofore used, run.” Now this is not so much to refuse compliance, as to give a proper answer. On the whole, we have here neither the exact petition nor the exact answer that would have been supposed from the account given by Mr. Hume ; the words of the Commons would have been supposed, from Hume's expressions, more reasonable, and those of the king more authoritative and arbitrary, than they really were ; that



is, an improper representation is given of both the one and the other.

"In the subsequent year," says Mr. Hume, "they desired that the king might renounce this pretended prerogative." The reference which is printed in the margin of Hume, in some editions, 132, should be 152, and is more exactly represented by Mr. Hume than any of the rest. For the part of the Parliament roll referred to we are indebted to the diligence, not of Cotton, but of his editor, the famous Prynne.

The petition from the Commons was for a *general* surrender of the right, totally and formally. But the king, whose end was now approaching, having nothing further to hope or fear from his people, and not inclined by his own act formally to abandon for his successor a power which he had sometimes found it so convenient to exercise, returned for answer, as might have been expected, — "As to that, That no charge be laid upon the people but by common assent; the king is not at all willing to do it, without great necessity, and for the defence of the realm, and where he may do it with reason."

In those other instances which are produced by Mr. Hume to prove the practice of arbitrary impositions, instances where Mr. Hume quotes no answer, there is either no answer from the king on record, or one that is soothing and apologetical, or one that is favorable to the right of the House of Commons. Indeed, the king's very silence must be considered as favorable to their right.

In one of the first instances of complaint referred to by Hume, the answer was, — "Forasmuch as these charges were ordained" — alluding to charges ordained by the Privy Council without the Commons — "for safe conduct of merchandises into the realm and forth to foreign parts, upon which conduct the king hath spent much, which before Michaelmas cannot well be levied, it seemeth that the levying of it, for so small a time to come, should not be grievous." This is apologetical. Again; some merchants had farmed the customs and subsidies, and raised the rate above that mentioned by Parliament; the Commons complained; the answer was, — "Let the merchants be called into Parliament and answer." In another instance of complaint *not* mentioned by Mr. Hume, the answer was the same as one already cited, — "That the imposition was made upon great necessity, with the assent of the courts, &c., and some of the Commons, and that the king wills not that such imposition be unduly drawn in consequence."

The student, after having weighed these answers, is then to reflect upon the great ability, attractive qualities, military talents, and brilliant victories of this renowned monarch, Edward the Third; and he must then consider whether no stronger conclusion can be drawn from the whole than what Mr. Hume leaves with his readers, which is this: that, "as to the right [of taxation], the continual remon-



stances of the Commons may *seem* to prove that it rather lay on their side."

The passage that has been thus taken from Mr. Hume was not selected as one in which he was either faulty or otherwise in his representations, but as one that exhibited, in the smallest compass, the nature of the constitution at that time, and ever after, till 1688, and as one that involved more especially the question of the right of taxation. It was literally the first that I tried. On examination, however, it turns out that we do not arrive at the conclusions which Mr. Hume has drawn for us; far from it; and we are thus taught to be more than ever suspicious of the historian's particular prejudices. And, on the whole, this instance will show you that you must not take it for granted that Mr. Hume accurately represents even the very authorities he quotes; so irresistible, in these cases, is the influence of the sentiments of the mind over the operations of the understanding.

I stop to observe, that, as a lecturer on history, I can only point out to you fields of inquiry and trains of reasoning, and it must be left for you to do the rest.

Thus, I have just now drawn your attention to one great line of objection to Mr. Hume's History, — his inaccurate representation of the very authorities he quotes. You must yourselves pursue the subject.

But I will now mention another, — the coloring which he gives to his materials, and this more particularly in a manner of his own. He ascribes to the personages of history, as they pass before him, the views and opinions of later ages, — those sentiments and reasonings, for instance, which his own enlightened and powerful mind was enabled to form, not those which either really were or could be formed by men thinking and acting many centuries before. But this is to mislead the reader, and, in fact, to draw him aside from all the proper instruction of history, much of which lies in the comparison of one age with another.

I will refer to an instance, taken from the times we are now considering, as a general specimen of what I conceive to be one of the most common and serious faults that can be objected to in the attractive pages of his History.

In his account of the unfortunate close of the reign of Richard the Second, Mr. Hume observes, that one man alone, the Bishop of Carlisle, had the courage, amid the general disloyalty and violence, to appear in defence of his unhappy master, and to plead his cause against all the power of the prevailing party. He then gives a representation of the speech. But if we turn to Sir John Hayward's History (the authority which Hume himself quotes), we may there see the speech fully given; and it will be found not without its beauties, but certainly very inferior to the representation of it which is exhib-

ited in Hume. The philosophic observations which are interwoven and added by Mr. Hume serve to give a great force and finish to the expostulations of the bishop in favor of the fallen monarch; but the more important consideration is, that they serve also to throw over the proceedings of the barons an air of greater violence and criminality than properly belongs to them; for their conduct rises up in still stronger contrast, if such views of the English constitution and of the principles of government could indeed have been taken and urged in such an assembly by a contemporary statesman, a man of like passions and like information with themselves.

I will venture to take up your time by considering more minutely the instance before us. Observe, first, the beautiful reasonings of Hume: it would be not a little marvellous, if they had been produced by the Bishop of Carlisle in the time of Richard the Second. "He represented," says Hume, "to the Parliament, that all the abuses of government which could justly be imputed to Richard, far from amounting to tyranny, were merely the result of error, youth, or misguided counsel"; this, though in different words, the bishop did say: "and admitted," continues Mr. Hume, "of a remedy more easy and salutary than a total subversion of the constitution"; this, which is of a more philosophic cast, the bishop did *not* say. Now mark what immediately follows in Hume; not any such observation as was very likely to be offered by the bishop to the barons, or even to have occurred to the mind of Sir John Hayward himself, two centuries afterwards, but the very observation which contains the whole of the philosophy of Mr. Hume while writing the History of England, — the great principle by means of which he defends all the arbitrary proceedings of our monarchs, and by which he reconciles his unwary readers to the admission of sentiments and opinions unfavorable to the best interests and assured rights of the popular part of our constitution. The bishop represented to the Lords, continues Mr. Hume, that even had these abuses of government "been much more violent and dangerous than they really were, they had chiefly proceeded from former examples of resistance, which, making the prince sensible of his precarious situation, had obliged him to establish his throne by irregular and arbitrary expedients": the bishop said nothing of the sort. And now observe the next remark that follows in Hume, — how worthy of the generalizing mind of the philosopher of the eighteenth century; how little likely to have been addressed by a warm-hearted ecclesiastic to the disorderly barons of the fourteenth, — that "laws could never secure the subject, which did not give security to the sovereign; and if the maxim of inviolable loyalty, which formed the basis of the English government, were once rejected, the privileges belonging to the several orders of the state, instead of being fortified by that licentiousness, would thereby lose the surest foundation of their force and stability."



All this is very true, and worthy of a great reasoner like Mr. Hume, when applying the powers of his mind to the subject of government; and all this may be cheerfully assented to by the warmest partisan of popular privileges; and the more so, because it is at length understood, that the king can act only by his ministers; and that though the king must be secure, that his mind may be at rest on the subject of his prerogative, and that the security also of his people may be thus undisturbed, still that his ministers need not; that they are responsible, at least, though the sovereign be not; that, in short, there is some one responsible, and that the community is not left at the mercy of fortune, and without any reasonable means of watching over its own interests.

No such interpretation, however, of this great principle of government is added by Mr. Hume; and neither the principle so stated, nor the interpretation, is to be found in Sir John Hayward; and it was not in this philosophic manner that the bishop reasoned, according to the representation of Sir John Hayward; his arguments were founded merely upon the obvious doctrines of passive obedience and the divine right of kings. "I will not speak," said the bishop, according to Sir John Hayward, "what may be done in a popular state or in a consular. . . . In these and such like governments, the prince hath not regal rights. . . . But if the sovereign majesty be in the prince, as it was in the three first empires, and in the kingdom of Judea and Israel, and is now in the kingdoms of England, France, Spain, Scotland, Muscovia, Turkey, Tartaria, Persia, Ethiopia, and almost all the kingdoms of Asia and Africke," — very like the philosophic reasonings of Hume, all this! England, Ethiopia, and Africke! — "although, for his vices, he be unprofitable to the subjects, yea hurtful, yea intolerable, yet can they lawfully neither harm his person nor hazard his power, whether by judgment or else by force; for neither one nor all magistrates have any authority over the prince, from whom all authority is derived, and whose only presence doth silence and suspend all inferior jurisdiction and power. As for force, what subject can attempt, or assist, or counsel, or conceal violence against his prince, and not incur the high and heinous crime of treason?"

The bishop then goes on to quote the instance of Nebuchadnezzar, of Balthasar, of Saul, and then insists, that "not only our actions, but our speeches also, and our very thoughts, are strictly charged with duty and obedience unto princes, whether they be good or evil; that the law of God ordaineth, that he which doth presumptuously against the ruler of the people shall die; that we are not to touch the Lord's anointed, nor rail upon the judges, neither speak evil against the ruler of the people; that the Apostles do demand, further, that even our thoughts and souls be obedient to higher powers; and lest any should imagine that they meant of good princes only, they speak



generally of all ; and further, to take away all doubt, they make express mention of the evil," &c., &c.

The bishop then goes on to illustrate his doctrine by the consideration of the domestic relation of parent and child. "The son must not lift up his hand," says he, "against the father, though, for all excess of villanies, odious and execrable both to God and man ; but our country is dearer unto us than our parents, and the prince is *pater patriæ*, the father of our country, and therefore, &c., &c., must not be violated, how imperious, how impious soever he be. Doth he command or demand our persons or our purses, we must not shun for the one nor shrink for the other ; for, as Nehemiah saith," continues the bishop, "kings have dominion over the bodies and over the cattle of their subjects, at their pleasure. . . . Yea, the Church hath declared it to be an heresy to hold that a prince may be slain or deposed by his subjects for any disorder or default, either in life or else in government."

Such is the reasoning of the bishop, as given by Sir John Hayward. And his philosophy, when it appears, is the following : — "There will be faults so long as there are men ; and as we endure with patience a barren year, if it happen, and unseasonable weather, and such other defects of nature, so must we tolerate the imperfections of rulers and quietly expect either reformation or else a change." This is the first specimen of it, and the only remaining philosophic position that I can observe is the following : — "Oh, how shall the world be pestered with tyrants, if subjects may rebel upon every pretence of tyranny !" The instances that follow to illustrate this remark are not well chosen by the bishop : — "If they levy a subsidy or any other taxation, it shall be claimed oppression," &c., &c.

And now what will my hearer suppose, if I tell him that I believe the speech thus given by Sir John Hayward to the good bishop is wholly the composition of Sir John himself ; and that, though the general statement of passive obedience may have been expressed by the bishop, no such words were uttered as he describes ? Walsingham takes no notice of the bishop's speech. Another historian, Hall, but about the time of Sir John Hayward, says that the bishop did rise up in his place and speak ; and the doctrines of passive obedience are put into his mouth by Hall. The same is done in the play of Richard the Second, by Shakspeare. And these doctrines were, possibly, the topics that he chiefly insisted upon ; but the only fact that can now be ascertained is, that he was thrown into prison for words spoken in Parliament in opposition to the usurpation of Henry ; and on this has been founded the very elaborate speech of Sir John Hayward, and the very improbable arguments ascribed to him by Hume. Now all this is not to write history, either in Mr. Hume or in Sir John Hayward.

And this instance will be sufficient to show you, as before, the par

ticular description of fault which may be objected to Mr. Hume, — that of coloring the materials before him, and attributing to the personages of history the sentiments of his own philosophic mind ; and this second description of fault is to be added to the former which I have mentioned, — that of not accurately representing the very passages he quotes.

In the next page of his History, indeed, when Mr. Hume comes to comment upon the title of Henry the Fourth to the crown, he attributes a speech to the king, and properly, for he can extract from the rolls of Parliament the very words which the king made use of. This Mr. Hume does, and this is to write history.

The words extracted are certainly very remarkable, and very descriptive of the scene and the age ; but it is relics of this kind that an historian should produce and make the subject of the philosophic meditation of his reader, not offer him modern views and sentiments of his own. A few barbarous words, or any distinct fact, that can be shown to be authentic, are worth volumes of reasonings and conjectures of a thinking mind ; or rather, it is on such relics and facts that the student must in the first place *alone* depend when he collects materials for his instruction, and he must never lose sight of them when he comes afterwards to build up his political reasonings and conclusions.

It is upon this account, and it is to impress this lesson upon your recollection, that I have gone into this detail, and perhaps not a little exercised your patience. It is for this reason, and for another, — to show you the importance of the political principles of men ; a point which I must for ever enforce in the course of these lectures. First observe the general remarks of Hume. “ Though some topics,” says Mr. Hume, while introducing the passages I have just quoted from him, “ though some topics employed by that virtuous prelate [the Bishop of Carlisle] may seem to favor too much the doctrine of passive obedience, &c., &c., such intrepidity as well as disinterestedness of behaviour proves,” says Mr. Hume, “ that, whatever his speculative principles were, his heart was elevated far above the meanness and abject submission of a slave.” Undoubtedly it does : this observation of Mr. Hume is very just, and therefore it is more incumbent upon me, as your lecturer, to impress upon your minds the importance of your political principles, that you may endeavour to be wise as well as virtuous. It is but too plain, from the historian’s own account, that men of the most noble feelings and honorable character, such as the bishop is here supposed by Mr. Hume to have been, may, on public occasions, act upon principles and enforce political doctrines which can have no tendency but to make their fellow-creatures base and servile, whatever they may be themselves, by injuring and destroying the only source of all elevated character in a people, the free principles of the constitution of their government. It is of



little consequence, that men may not have, themselves, the feelings of slaves, if they propagate doctrines that will practically and in the result make a nation of slaves around them.

But to return to Hume. Gilbert Stuart, a very able, though somewhat impetuous, inquirer into the earlier parts of our history, has pronounced his opinion upon the work of Mr. Hume in the following words:—"From its beginning to its conclusion, it is chiefly to be regarded as a plausible defence of prerogative. As an elegant and a spirited composition, it merits every commendation. But no friend to humanity, and to the freedom of this kingdom, will consider his constitutional inquiries, with their effect on his narrative, and compare them with the ancient and venerable monuments of our story, without feeling a lively surprise and a patriot indignation." This opinion, however severe, is not very different from that which is in general entertained by others who from previous study are competent to decide,—and this, while the literary merits of the History are universally acknowledged. The student will therefore read with more than ordinary care what he is told is so fitted at once to charm his taste and to mislead his understanding.

Since I drew up this lecture, a work has been published by Mr. Brodie, of Edinburgh. It is not well written in point of style, and the author must be considered as a writer on the popular side, but he is a man of research and independence of mind. It is a work of weight and learning, and it appears to me for ever to have damaged, and most materially damaged, the character of Mr. Hume as an accurate historian. It justifies the opinion I have just alluded to, as pronounced by Gilbert Stuart, and maintained by others competent to decide.

I must observe, before I conclude, that it is the general effect of the narrative of this able historian that is of so much importance. Particular passages might be drawn from his work of every description, favorable as well as unfavorable to the privileges of the subject. But the sentiments conveyed by such particular passages, taken singly, do in fact stand opposed to the general impression that results from the whole. Were a popular writer to seek for observations favorable to the cause of the liberties of England, he would often find them nowhere better expressed; but their being found in the History of Hume is a circumstance quite analogous to what constantly obtains in every literary performance, where the author has, on whatever account, a general purpose to accomplish, which the nature of his subject does not in strict reason allow. Truth is then continually mixed up with misrepresentation, and the whole mass of the reasoning, which in its final impression is materially wrong, is so interspersed with observations which are in themselves perfectly right, that the reader is at no time sufficiently on his guard, and is at last betrayed into conclusions totally unwarrantable, and at vari-



ance with his best feelings and soundest opinions. Observe the writings of Rochefoucauld or Mandeville; you will there see what I am describing,—as, indeed, you may in every work where the author is deceived himself or is deceiving others.

One word more and I conclude,—one word as an estimate of the whole subject between Mr. Hume and his opponents.

In the first place, we may agree with Mr. Hume, that the whole of our history during the period from Edward the First to Henry the Eighth was a scene of irregularity and of great occasional violence,—that neither could the laws be always maintained, nor could the principles of legislation ever be said to be well understood; we must admit, therefore, that it is not fair to imagine, as Mr. Hume complains we do, that all the princes who were unfortunate in their government were necessarily tyrannical in their conduct, and that resistance to the monarch always proceeded from some attempt on his part to invade the privileges of the subject. This we must admit.

But, in the second place, it must be observed, that the struggle between the subject and the crown was constantly kept up in the times of the most able as well as of the weakest monarchs; that they who resisted the prerogative never did it without producing those maxims and without asserting those principles of freedom which are necessary to all rational government,—which are by no means fitted in themselves to produce anarchy, and by no means inconsistent with all those salutary prerogatives of the crown which are requisite to the regular protection of the subject.

In the third place, that, if these maxims and principles had not been from time to time asserted, and sometimes with success, the result must have been that our constitution would have degenerated, like that of France and of every other European state, into a system of monarchical power, unlimited and unrestrained by the interference of any legislative assemblies.

And that therefore, in the last place, Mr. Hume tells the story of England without giving sufficient praise to those patriots who preserved and transmitted those general habits of thinking on political subjects which have always distinguished this country, and to which alone every Englishman owes, at this day, all that makes his life a blessing and his existence honorable.

## LECTURE VI.

## ENGLAND.

IN my last lecture I called your attention to England. After showing you that in the consideration of its history we soon arrived at the same points as in the history of the rest of Europe, I mentioned to you, that there were before you the facts of our history and the philosophy of it; that you were to acquire a knowledge of the one, but that you must endeavour to understand the other; above all, that the constitutional history of your country must be your great object of inquiry; that Rapin, Hume, and Millar must be your authors; at the same time I referred you to other sources of information and other historians.

Next, I stated to you, that a difference in the opinions of men had existed and always must exist in every mixed form of government; that there must always be those who favor the monarchical and those who favor the popular part of it; that through the whole of our history, down to 1688, there had been maintained a struggle between prerogative and privilege; and that no thoroughly impartial historian of our annals could be found.

Lastly, I attempted to give you some general description of the merits of Hume, the most popular and the most able, and therefore the most important, of our historians. I endeavoured to protect you, or rather to enable you to protect yourselves, from the mistakes into which you might fall, if you depended on his representations, if you rested upon them with that confidence which his evident good sense and apparent calmness and impartiality would naturally inspire. His references, as I then showed you, do not always bear him out in his statements; and his omissions must be taken into account, as well as his misrepresentations;—this is the first point. But he ascribes to those who acted in the earlier scenes of our history sentiments and opinions which belong only to his own philosophic mind;—this is the second. On the whole, he does not tell the story of our constitutional history fairly. He must, in his facts, be compared with Rapin,—if necessary, with original authorities; and in his philosophy, with Millar and others.

And now I must digress for a moment, to offer you a remark which I hope you will hereafter not think very unnatural for me to have made on the present occasion.

It is wonderful, then, I must observe, it is wonderful to see men like Mr. Hume, of peaceful habits and of benevolent affections, men at the same time of improved minds and of excellent sense,—it is

wonderful to see them so indifferent to the popular privileges of the community. Yet is this a sort of phenomenon that we witness every day. Such men would not in practice vindicate themselves from oppression by rising up in arms against their arbitrary governors; they are not of a temperament to set their lives upon a cast. What possible chance, then, have *they* for the security of their property, for the very freedom of their persons, above all, for the exercise of their minds, but the existence of popular privileges? To them, above all other men, civil freedom is every thing.

Civil freedom cannot, indeed, exist without the existence at the same time of executive power, that is, of prerogative. Men must be protected from the multitude. But surely it can still less exist without the existence of popular privileges; because society must be protected from the few, as well as from the many, — from the insolence, injustice, and caprice of the high, as of the low. The mistake that is made seems to be, that it is supposed popular privileges will always lead to disorder and render the government insecure.

The very reverse is the fact; so much so, that certain privileges may be trusted, not merely to legislative bodies, men of property and education (which is the first and main point to be contended for), but even to the lowest orders of the people; the very rabble can learn to know how far they are to go, and with this, as with their right, to be content and advance no farther. The advantages obtained in the cheerfulness and vigor that are thus imparted to the whole political system of a country are above all price, and the occasional excesses of a mob are an evil trifling, and, in comparison, of no account.

Men of arbitrary or timid minds *will* not understand this, and men bred under arbitrary governments never *can*. Foreigners, who survey, for instance, one of our popular elections at Brentford or Westminster, generally suppose that our government is to break up in the course of the week, and have been known to announce to their correspondents on the Continent, and even to their courts, an approaching revolution. The mob, in the mean time, know very well the limits within which they may for a time disturb the peace of the community, and they therefore sing their ballads, hoot their superiors, remind them (very usefully) of their faults and follies, parade the streets, and brandish their bludgeons; but as to an insurrection or revolution, no enterprise of the kind ever enters into their thoughts; certainly it makes no part of their particular bill of the performances.

In a word, power is like money; men should be accustomed, as much as possible, as much as they can bear, to the handling of it, that they may learn the proper use of it. They are so, more or less, in free governments; not so in arbitrary; and this is the circumstance which always constitutes the insecurity of arbitrary governments, while they stand, and the difficulty of improving them, when they can stand no longer.



Where popular privileges exist, the monarch can always distinguish between the characters of a lawful sovereign and an arbitrary ruler; so can his counsellors, so can his people. These are advantages totally invaluable. The world has nothing to do with certainty and security; but popular privileges afford the best chance of real tranquillity, strength, and happiness to all the constituent parts of a body politic,—the monarch, the aristocracy, and the people.

Far from viewing the popular part of our mixed constitution with the indifference, or suspicion, or dislike, or hostility, which Mr. Hume and others seem to do, nothing, as I conceive, can be so perfectly reasonable or truly philosophic as the interest, the anxiety, the reverence, with which Millar and others have pursued the history of the democratic part of our constitution through our most eventful annals.

Do not fail to observe that the two great countries of Europe, France and England, set out from beginnings much the same; but France lost her constitution, and England not. How was this? I ask the student; and let him ask, in his turn, the authors I recommend,—the Abbé de Mably, and Hume, and Rapin, and Blackstone, and, above all, Millar. Surely the question will not be an indifferent one to him. He deserves not the name of Englishman, if it be.

I must enter a little more into the subject, though detail is impossible.

The three great points are always,—1st, What is the law? 2d, Who are the legislators? and lastly, and above all, What are the general spirit and habits of thinking in the community?

Take, then, the long period before us, from the departure of the Romans to the reign of Henry the Eighth.

1st. What was the law,—the constitutional law more particularly, if I may so speak?—You will find the *history* of it given you, in a manner sufficiently concise and intelligible, in many parts of Blackstone and in Millar. You must mark its gradual improvements, and you must mark them again and again, through different periods, down to our own. I speak now chiefly of the first and fourth volumes of Blackstone. In former courses of my lectures, I had mentioned a few of the principal changes that took place; but I now think it best to refer to Blackstone and Millar, and to do no more. I do not occupy your time with what you may better find elsewhere.

But, 2dly, who have been the legislators?—This is a very curious part of our history. There was once a Witenagemote, or great national assembly. How was it constituted, and what were its powers? But we have no such assembly now. When, therefore, did it cease? and, when it did cease, how came another assembly to arise,—a Parliament, a House of Barons or Lords? But more; we have now not only one assembly, but two,—not only a House of

Lords, but a House of Commons. This is surely still more extraordinary. Not only the barons, the aristocracy, have their house of assembly, but the commonalty, the people, have, in some way or other, obtained the same. But how, or when, or why? — Such are the objects of inquiry which I have to offer to your curiosity.

I will first say a word on the origin of these two different houses of assembly; secondly, on the origin and growth of the different prerogatives and privileges belonging to each estate, of king, lords, and commons.

The great facts of this first subject, those that you are especially to observe, seem to be these: — that there was first a Witenagemote, or Great Council; that this Witenagemote existed before and soon after the Conquest, but that it at length ceased, or the name was altered into that of Parliament. Now, unfortunately, no records exist of this Witenagemote and Parliament after the Conquest, so that we cannot ascertain what were the qualifications that gave a seat in those assemblies, or how the one was gradually changed into the other.

The next facts are, that burgesses from the towns were summoned by Leicester, at the close of the reign of Henry the Third, afterwards by Edward the First, and the succeeding monarchs; and lastly, that, in the course of the reign of Edward the Third, the lesser thanes or knights of the shire had been incorporated with the burgesses, and they had become together a separate house. But of these most important events, this rise of a second house of assembly, or regular estate, and this mixture of the knights of the shire with the burgesses, no detail or history can be given; no sufficient records exist. All this is very unfortunate.

You will now, therefore, understand how easily our antiquarians and patriots may dispute on the origin and growth of our House of Commons. But on this subject you will observe what is said by Gilbert Stuart on the one side, by Hume on the other. You must, on the whole, be decided, I think, by Millar.

This lecture was written many years ago; but I may now mention, that you may note what is said by Burke, in his *Abridgment of the English History*, where he speaks of the Witenagemote. There are also two articles in the *Edinburgh Review*, volume xxvi. in March, 1817,\* which you may consider.

These works and their references will enable you to go through all the learning connected with the subject; though I conceive the works themselves will be quite sufficient for your information, quite sufficient to enable you to form your opinion. I will give you, in a few words, some idea of the reasonings of these writers.

\* There is a degree of confusion in this reference. The articles alluded to are probably one in vol. xxvi. (June, 1816) on the *Constitution of Parliament*, and one in vol. xxviii. (March, 1817) on *Annual Parliaments*, &c. — N.



The constitution, then, and office of the Witenagemote seem to have been as analogous to those of the free assemblies we read of in Tacitus as the different nature of two different, though kindred, periods of society would lead us to expect. The principal powers of government were vested in this great council. It decided on peace and war, and on all military concerns; it made laws; and it concurred in the exercise of the royal prerogative, as far as we can observe, on all occasions. The *wites* or *sapientes* are always supposed or referred to in the documents that have reached us; but who these *wites* or *sapientes* were cannot now be accurately determined, and, in the first place, a controversy has arisen with respect to the constitution of this great council, whether it was entirely aristocratical or only partly so; and this is, in truth, the dispute of the origin of the House of Commons.

Stuart and others contend, that the people had always their share in the legislature, that they were even represented in the Witenagemote; and, to support this opinion, various expressions are produced from such documents as have come down to us: — “*Seniores, sapientes populi mei*,” — “*Convocato communi concilio tam cleri quam populi*,” — “*Præsentibus et subscribentibus archiepiscopis, &c., &c., procerumque totius terræ, aliorumque fidelium infinitâ multitudine*.”

But to this it is replied by Millar, that these expressions, if they prove any thing, prove too much, for they go to prove that *all* the people, even those of the lowest rank, personally voted in the national council. And it is urged by Hume, among other remarks, that the members of the Witenagemote are almost always called the *principes, magnates, proceres*, &c., — terms which seem to suppose an aristocracy; that the boroughs also, from the low state of commerce, were so small and so poor, and the inhabitants in such dependence on the great men, that it seems in no wise probable that they would be admitted as part of the national council. And the various remarks and arguments of Millar, a zealous protector of the popular part of our constitution, take the same general ground, and are on the whole decisive.

The most important remark, however, made by Stuart, on the other side of the question, is a reference to a paper in the 5th of Richard the Second. In the latter end of the passage (to the former part a reply might be made) are these remarkable words: — “And if any sheriff of the realm be from henceforth negligent in making his returns of writs of the Parliament, or that he leave out of the said returns any cities or boroughs which be bound and *of old time* were wont to come to the Parliament, he shall be amerced,” &c. “*Of old time*,” you will observe. The intervening space of two or three reigns, it is contended, between the 49th of Henry the Third and 5th of Richard the Second (about a century) could never give occasion to the use of such an expression as the “old time.”



Again, Lord Lyttelton, in his *Life of Henry the Second*, goes through a very candid and temperate inquiry into this question, and he thinks the Commons was originally a part of the national council or Parliament. The strongest evidence he produces is drawn from the two celebrated instances of the petitions sent, one by the borough of St. Albans, the other by Barnstaple.

The words are given by Lyttelton in the petition from St. Albans; they pray to send burgesses, "*prout totis retroactis temporibus venire consueverunt, &c., tempore Edwardi [I.], &c., et progenitorum suorum.*" The date of this petition is 1315, in the time of Edward the Second, and it is contended that such words must mean a period before the 49th of Henry the Third, the supposed origin of the House of Commons, which was only fifty-one years before: "*totis retroactis temporibus,*" &c. It is, therefore, curious to observe what was the answer made.

The answer to the petition was,—"Scrutentur rotuli, &c., si temporibus progenitorum regis burgenses prædicti solebant venire vel non." Now this answer would be somewhat strange, on the supposition that the 49th of Henry the Third was the date of the origin of the House of Commons. "Let the rolls be searched," &c., &c., to find what, if the origin of the Commons was only fifty-one years back, it was well known could not possibly exist. And yet, after all, this might be the technical mode of making answer, the legal and formal way of telling the petitioners that they were talking nonsense.

Again, with respect to the second petition, that from Barnstaple. Barnstaple founds its rights on a charter of Athelstan, which would have been again somewhat ridiculous, if these rights had been known (as they might have been) to have originated in the time of Henry the Third, only eighty-one years before the time of this petition in 1345.

Thus we have three distinct testimonies: the words of the Act of Parliament, the words "old time," in the time of Richard the Second, one hundred and eighteen years after the 49th of Henry the Third; the words of this petition from Barnstaple, eighty-one years; and those in the petition from St. Albans, fifty-one years after.

But to all this it is answered, that instances may be produced where distinct falsehoods are asserted in petitions to Parliament in the way of pretension, when towns and boroughs are speaking of their former history, and that this may be the case in these petitions from St. Albans and Barnstaple. The town\* said it had never been represented before, though it had made before not less than twenty-two returns.

\* Not St. Albans, nor Barnstaple, — as is clearly manifest from what is previously said of the tenor of their petitions, and from the whole course of the reasoning on the subject, in the text. Their pretensions were of a character exactly opposite to

Dr. Lingard thinks that these expressions are a sort of verbiage; so endless are the difficulties of this curious subject. And you will also observe, that, first, Spelman could find no summons of a burgess before the 49th of Henry the Third. Again, Daines Barrington declares, in a note, page 49 of his *Observations on the Ancient Statutes*, "that no one can read the old historians and chronicles who will observe the least allusion\* or trace of the Commons having been anciently a part of the legislature, if he does not sit down to the perusal with an *intention* of proving that they formed a component part." And Mr. Burke, in his *English History*, after struggling with the subject for some little time, observes, — "All these things are, I think, sufficient to show of what a visionary nature those systems are which would settle the ancient constitution in the most remote times exactly in the same form in which we enjoy it at this day; not considering that such mighty changes in manners, during so many ages, always must produce a considerable change in laws, and in the forms as well as the powers of all governments."

On the whole, the favorers of the popular interest would have done better, I think, to have contented themselves with resisting any improper conclusions that might have been drawn against popular privi-

those here spoken of, — not that they had *never* been represented before, but that they had *always*, or from a very remote period, been represented; and they pray, accordingly, that this right may be continued to them. The town here referred to, the name of which is thus inadvertently omitted by Professor Smyth, is undoubtedly the same that we find mentioned in the following passage from Hallam's *Middle Ages*, Chapter viii. Part 3: — "The elective franchise was deemed by the boroughs no privilege or blessing, but rather, during the chief part of this period, an intolerable grievance. Where they could not persuade the sheriff to omit sending his writ to them, they set it at defiance by making no return. And this seldom failed to succeed; so that after one or two refusals to comply, which brought no punishment upon them, they were left in quiet enjoyment of their insignificance. The town of Torrington, in Devonshire, went farther, and obtained a charter of exemption from sending burgesses, grounded upon what the charter asserts to appear on the rolls of chancery, — that it had never been represented before the 21st of Edward the Third. This is absolutely false, and is a proof how little we can rely upon the veracity of records, — Torrington having made not less than twenty-two returns before that time." — N.

\* Professor Smyth quotes from the first edition of Barrington's work, published in 1766. In the third edition, published in 1769, the expression, "*the least allusion*," which the author seems upon reflection to have regarded as an overstatement, is modified to "*any strong allusion*." This modification, though of some importance in itself considered, does not, however, materially affect the main bearing of the passage as a whole, in its present connection.

To those who may have occasion to consult the work here referred to, it may be important to know that the first edition is pronounced by the author, in the preface to the third, "an hasty publication," marked by "many defects," and "not so accurate in many particulars as it should have been." The second seems to have been but little improved; and soon after it was published, it was found necessary, in consequence of the discovery of a large body of new materials, to suppress the copies which remained unsold, and to issue a third. This third edition, besides "very considerable additions," covering nearly two hundred pages, by which the original was enlarged more than one fourth, contains numerous important corrections; it is material to observe, also, that the work now appeared, for the first time, under the sanction of the author's name. The last edition, therefore, is obviously the one which should always be used, whether for study or citation: the use of the first for the quotation given in the text, it is hardly necessary to remark, was undoubtedly accidental. — N.



leges from the non-appearance of the commons in the Witenagemote. Their absence (for I think their absence must be admitted) may surely be accounted for without any prejudice to the popular cause; and the propriety of their appearance in the national councils of a subsequent period may in like manner be shown without difficulty, on every principle of natural justice and political expediency.

Since writing the above, an important work has appeared on the Dark Ages, by Mr. Hallam. The question to which I have just alluded is there discussed with great diligence, temper, and learning. I do not know that the general impression which you will have already received from me will be altered by a reference to his work, but you must by all means turn to it, that all the points of this very obscure, difficult, and yet curious and interesting case, may be properly considered, as they may be, if you will avail yourselves of his valuable labors.

On the one side, as he very properly observes, it may be said, that the king, as we find from innumerable records, imposed tallages upon his demesne towns at discretion: but, on the other side, that no public instrument, previous to the 49th of Henry the Third, names the citizens and burgesses as constituent parts of Parliament, though prelates, barons, knights, and sometimes freeholders, are enumerated; while, since the undoubted admission of the commons (the 49th of Henry the Third), they are almost invariably mentioned: again, that no historian speaks of representatives, or uses the word citizen or burgess, in describing those who were present in Parliament. All this is very strong, and on the whole, as it appears to me, added to what you have heard from others, decisive of the question.

Having thus alluded to the origin of our two different houses of assembly, I will next advert to the origin and growth of the different prerogatives and privileges belonging to each estate of the Lords and Commons.

This subject will require and deserve your patience as students; it is surely very curious. Great light has been thrown upon it by Professor Millar. De Lolme is too much of a panegyrist on our constitution, as indeed is Blackstone, — not to say that the latter is rather a lawyer than a constitutional writer. Blackstone is quite inferior to himself, when he becomes a political reasoner; and if he had lived in our own times, he would not have written (he could not have written, a man of such capacity) in the vague and even superficial manner in which he has certainly done, on many of such occasions, in his great work of the Commentaries. Millar is the author you must study, and I will now endeavour to give you some notion of the more important results of his researches, — that is, I will endeavour to give you some idea of the sort of reasoning and information which you will find in his book.

The Witenagemote, under the influence of the Conquest, became,



in the first place, more and more aristocratical; in the second, its *regular* meetings less and less frequent, till they at last ceased, — an important event.

1st. It became more and more aristocratical, because the smaller landed proprietors, in the progress of the feudal system, attached themselves to the greater lords, and thus gradually excluded themselves from the Witenagemote, where those only could meet and deliberate who were considered as equals. Another reason contributed to the same effect. There were many lords who, though they did not attach themselves to a superior lord, and merge their consequence in his, had still an “allodial property,” though less extensive, and though inferior. Such lords were less and less disposed to appear in the Great Council, because they were more and more likely to be overshadowed by the greater barons, and to find themselves and their opinions disregarded. This difference in *wealth* was at length followed by difference in *dignity*, and a man might be noble, yet not one of the *proceres*, — not one, for example, unless he had forty hides of land. The nobility were thus divided into the greater and lesser thanes, a distinction that you must remember.

2dly. The regular meetings of the Witenagemote at last ceased. An important point, it may be observed; for what was the result? We might have lost our legal assemblies, as France did.

These regular meetings of the Witenagemote were originally held at Christmas, Easter, and Whitsuntide. But, besides these, there were also occasional meetings on extraordinary emergencies, summoned by the king himself. These last became more frequent with the increase of the national business; and the regular meetings were of less consequence and less regarded, — the more so, as part of their business had originally consisted in hearing appeals from inferior courts. These appeals had multiplied till it was necessary to form a separate court from out of the Great Council, called the *Aula Regis*, for the sole purpose of deciding lawsuits. In this manner a material office of the Great Council was superseded; though, as the *Aula Regis* originally acted as a sort of deputy, an appeal still remained in the last instance to the Council, which is now retained by the House of Peers. It must also have been at all times the policy of the monarch to supersede the regular meetings of the Great Council by auxiliary courts, and by those meetings which were summoned by himself. And in this manner, partly from reasons of apparent necessity and convenience, partly by the natural ambition of the monarch, partly from the disorders of the times, and not a little from the supineness, ignorance, and want of concert among the barons themselves, the Great Council ceased to assemble at its stated periods; and its extraordinary meetings, with this appeal from the great court of law, were all that remained, as vestiges of its former power.

But these extraordinary meetings could not take place unless called

by the sovereign. It was possible, therefore, that these meetings might at length cease, and with them the political existence of the Great Council altogether. If this event had taken place, the constitution of England would, in the result, have been the same with that of France.

This was, however, most fortunately, not the case. But why not? It was thus : — William had introduced the feudal system, and those who held immediately of the crown became, in consequence, members of the great national council. Now the labors of our antiquarians have informed us, from an examination of “Domesday Book,” that these immediate vassals scarcely exceeded the number of six hundred ; and as they, therefore, held the territory of all England, with the exception of the three northern counties of the king’s own domains, each baron must have been very powerful ; and it is evident that the king must have found it always expedient to avoid their displeasure and to secure their assistance, and therefore to have recourse to them for their advice, or rather, for their public concurrence, in the great measures of his government. These national councils were, therefore, very fortunately for posterity, never without their use or importance to the Norman kings ; they, therefore, often called these extraordinary meetings.

But again, to the more frequent return of these occasional meetings, and consequently to the existence of the national council, there was another circumstance very favorable. The crown was not transmitted, as in France, for many centuries, from son to son. Most of the Norman kings were usurpers, — William the Second, Henry the First, Stephen. Even Henry the Second obtained possession of the crown only after a compromise. John was, again, a usurper ; and even in the time of Henry the Second, of Richard the First, and Henry the Third, the Great Councils were continually appealed to, from the circumstances in which these monarchs were placed. In this manner, most happily for England, and indeed for mankind, the assembly of the nation still made, though not its regular, yet its *occasional* appearance, and with sufficient frequency to maintain its place in the legislature.

Again, it is known that the Witenagemote had originally consisted of allodial or independent proprietors ; that not only had these gradually diminished, but it was the policy of the Conqueror to extinguish all the allodial tenures, and to render all the proprietors of land vassals of the crown ; that this in the twentieth year of his reign he at last effected ; and that the Great Council was thus entirely altered, and came to consist of those only who held immediately from the crown. Our antiquarians have also furnished sufficient evidence to show that Great Councils were held by William the Conqueror, William Rufus, and the succeeding monarchs ; so that, on the whole, it may be allowed, that the interests of the crown so operated, that, in



point of fact, the national assemblies did maintain their existence, and did occasionally meet.

And here the student must again observe how nice are the issues on which the political privileges of a nation are to depend. We have here a great difficulty. For observe, it certainly would not have been for the good of the whole that the Great Councils should assemble whenever they themselves chose; nor even, perhaps, of right at stated times, as they had done before the Conquest. It might be desirable, even, that the sovereign *alone* should have the power of calling them together; but if this power was to be exercised merely at the pleasure of the monarch, and if he was not, in some way or other, to be laid under the necessity of occasionally meeting the national assemblies, arbitrary power must have been the consequence. And yet a principle so delicate as this was to be left to the arbitration of the rude warfare and undiscerning passions of our ancestors.

There were other points, not less delicate and important, that were now adjusted apparently with little foresight or anxiety about the consequences. I shall mention them, as I mentioned the last, from my wish to offer you specimens of the subject now before you, and with a hope of attracting your curiosity.

The Witenagemote, from its origin and nature, had always decided on peace and war; but the moment the members of it became vassals of the crown, their military service became due to their lord whenever required, and the justice or wisdom of the contest was no longer any part of their concern. The important prerogative of declaring peace or war was thus at once transferred to the crown: with the crown it has ever since remained; not that circumstances are the same, — not that any national council has ever deliberated upon the subject; such deliberations upon such points are impossible; but because a prerogative like this, once enjoyed, was too important to be willingly resigned, and could not forcibly be taken away. Whether expedient or not, it has, therefore, been transmitted as an inheritance of the crown; and any restraint or control it is to meet with must arise from causes that have grown up into importance as imperceptibly as did the prerogative itself. So fortunate may every people justly esteem themselves, who are possessed of a form of government which is in practice tolerably good; for the affairs of mankind have but little to do with the precision of theory or the inferences of reasoning.

Taxation, in like manner, was a most important prerogative of the Witenagemote. Fortunately for posterity, it was not lost. For, in the first place, the crown had immense domains and a large revenue of its own, and therefore did not find it *entirely* necessary to attempt the usurpation of the power of taxation. And secondly, the injury which the barons sustained by paying money could be understood by



them without any great political foresight or comprehension of the general principles of government. The obtaining of money from the subject was, at that time, very fortunately for us, an exercise of occasional oppression and force, rather than a regular operation of legislative authority. Finally, upon extraordinary occasions, the king really did apply to his subjects, to his vassals, for an *aid*, which was a condition of their feudal tenure. In lieu of military service, he received a pecuniary composition called a *scutage*; from the socage vassals, a payment called a *hidage*, in place of various services which, as agricultural tenants, they were bound to render him; from the inhabitants of towns, tolls, and duties, or tallages, in return for his protection; and from traders, certain duties, called *customs*, on the transit of goods. In this manner was the crown placed in a state of comparative opulence and independence, during the earlier eras of our constitution. As these sources of revenue declined, the other branches of the legislature were advancing into strength. They were thus able, by a continued struggle, to prevent these privileges from being converted into fixed oppression, and to maintain the right, which it was so desirable they should alone exercise, of concurring with the crown before the community could be legally taxed.

It were endless, at least it is not very possible in lectures like these, to pursue the subject of the formation of our legislature through all its parts, or to describe the origin of different constitutional privileges and prerogatives. You may judge of the interest belonging to these discussions, I hope, from what I have already said. I had, indeed, put down other specimens of the subject, but I am obliged, for want of time, to omit them. My observations referred to what I thought the important points, and which I must now finally recommend to your attention: for instance, the addition that was made to the national assembly by the representatives of the boroughs; the separation of the whole into two houses,—a most important point; how the lesser barons, the knights of the shire, originally belonging to the upper, fell into the lower house; how the House of Commons probably thus maintained its consequence, if not its existence; how the House of Commons obtained a paramount and almost exclusive influence over the taxation of the country. None of these happy events took place in the constitution of France, or other European governments. You will find them explained, often with great success, by Millar. But you must not forget the learned and very valuable work of Mr. Hallam, who is not always satisfied with Millar, and should have stated his objections more in the detail to a writer so respectable and so popular. Nor, again, must you omit to study the pages of Sir James Mackintosh's History. This lecture, and all the lectures of my first two courses, were drawn up many years before the appearance of either of these important publications.

I must now pass on to the third part, which I have announced to you as one even of more importance than the former two. The first, you will remember, was, What are the laws? the second, Who are the legislators? But the third, to which I now allude, is, The spirit and habits of thinking that exist in the country.

Of our country, if it be said that none has ever enjoyed a better constitution, it may at the same time be said that none has ever been more honorably distinguished by efforts to obtain it. In considering the events of the earlier periods of our history, the student should never lose sight of the feudal system and the Papal power. These, in the instance of our own country, as in the rest of Europe, soon became the great impediments to the improvement of human happiness.

But there was a peculiarity in the case of England, which was attended with important consequences. The feudal system had not proceeded by its own natural gradations; it had not been regularly *introduced*, but it had been *established* by the Conqueror *violently*, and on a *sudden*, in its last stage of oppression.

In an earlier and milder state, it seems to have existed in its principles, if not in its name and ceremonies, among the Anglo-Saxons; but it did not in this island attain its final maturity by regular growth, as it had done in the rest of Europe. And this acceleration of the system, that seemed, at first, to be more than usually fatal to every hope of liberty, was in the event much otherwise.

The Saxon constitution was broken in upon when in a state of great comparative freedom. It was necessarily regretted by all to whom it had ever been known, its practices were in part retained, its praises transmitted, its memory cherished; and it became at length dear even to the Normans, who began to consider themselves as belonging to the island, and who were oppressed by the rigors of the system which their own king and countrymen had established.

Now it is to that spirit and those habits of thinking that were thus inherited from the Anglo-Saxon government and introduced into the character of the Norman conquerors, that we are so much indebted, when we speak of the superiority of our constitution and the merits of our ancestors. Our history shows a continued struggle between the crown and the barons, but at the same time it constantly speaks of the unwearied clamors of the nation, — first for the laws of Edward the Confessor, and afterwards for the charters that were obtained from our unwilling monarchs.

It is to these clamors for the laws of Edward the Confessor, it is to these charters thus bargained for, or extorted, that I would wish to direct your attention. It is *here* you are to find the proper object of your admiration, — the free principles of your mixed constitution, the original source of that free spirit which distinguishes your own



English character. For observe, — to take a familiar instance, — when a rich man walks our streets or villages, he will not offend a poor man, however poor, if he has the feelings of an Englishman within him; in like manner, if a poor man be struck or insulted, he will immediately tell his oppressor, that, though poor, he is an Englishman, and will not be trampled upon. Now these are most honorable and totally invaluable traits of national character, not to be found in other countries in Europe: in spite of our immense system of taxation and other unfortunate circumstances, they still to a considerable degree exist. The problem I propose to you is to give an historical and philosophical explanation of them.

In the first place, then, and to look up to the highest point of their origin, they were derived from our Saxon ancestors, and afterwards from our Norman ancestors; and therefore at present I would wish to attract your curiosity to the two subjects I have just mentioned, — the Laws of Edward the Confessor, and the Charters.

But when we turn to look at the laws of Edward the Confessor, we meet with a most uncomfortable disappointment, — the laws are lost. All the notion that can now be formed of them must be derived, as it is supposed, from the maxims of the common law, such as it is received and transmitted from age to age by our courts and judges. Great pains were taken by the illustrious Selden to discover these celebrated laws, but in vain. In the Note-book on the table you will find a short account of his labors; which, as a concise specimen of what the researches of an antiquarian, and even of a constitutional writer, must often be, I would recommend you to read.

With respect to the charters, the second subject I mentioned, we have been more fortunate; we may consider ourselves as in possession of them; and they have been made accessible, not only to the learning of an antiquarian, but to the knowledge of every man of ordinary education: this has been done by Blackstone. "There is no transaction," says Blackstone, "in the ancient part of our English history more interesting and important than the rise and progress, the gradual mutation, and final establishment of the charters of liberties, emphatically styled the 'Great Charter' and 'Charter of the Forest'; and yet there is none that has been transmitted down to us with less accuracy and historical precision." The Vinerian Professor was therefore animated to undertake an authentic and correct edition of the Great Charter and Charter of the Forest, with some other auxiliary charters, statutes, and corroborating instruments, carefully printed from the originals themselves, or from contemporary enrolments or records: the work he executed and delivered to the public.

Of his "History of the Charters" it is in vain to attempt any abridgment; for such is the precision of his taste, and such the importance of the subject, that there is not a sentence in the composi-



tion that is not necessary to the whole, and that should not be perused. Whatever other works may be read slightly, or omitted, this is one the entire meditation of which can in no respect be dispensed with. The claims which it has on our attention are of no common nature.

The labor which this eminent lawyer has bestowed on the subject is sufficiently evident. Yet, however distinguished for his high endowments and extensive acquirements, and however impressed with a sense of the advantages to be derived from a free government, he has certainly never been considered as a writer very particularly anxious for the popular part of the constitution, notwithstanding his occasional very crude declamations of a popular nature; and, on the whole, these charters must have been very instrumental in saving our country from the establishment of arbitrary power, or they would never have excited in the Professor such extraordinary exertion and respect.

In the second place, we may surely be expected to consider with some attention what our ancestors acquired with such difficulty and danger, and maintained with such unshaken courage and perseverance. These charters, says Blackstone, "from their first concession under King John, A. D. 1215, had been often endangered and undergone very many mutations for the space of near a century, but were now [in the 29th of Edward the Second\*] fixed upon an eternal basis; having, in all, before and since this time, as Sir Edward Coke observes, been established, confirmed, and commanded to be put in execution by two-and-thirty several acts of Parliament."

There is a commentary on Magna Charta at the close of Sullivan's Lectures on the Laws of England, which will be very serviceable to you in your perusal of this great record of our liberties.

My comments on these charters, given in my former course, I now omit. For these charters must be read attentively by yourselves, and you will easily acquire a proper insight into the nature of their provisions. The result of your first perusal will be that of disappointment; you will think that they contain nothing very remarkable, nothing much connected with civil liberty, as you now understand and enjoy it. This gives me another opportunity (I cannot avail myself too often of such opportunities) to remind you that you must always identify yourselves with those who appear before you, from time to time, in the pages of history; — this is the first point; — and that it is the general spirit and meaning of the whole of a constitutional transaction, not the minute detail of it, that you must always more particularly consider; — this is the second point.

To advert to these points a little longer. — When we look into these charters for those provisions of civil liberty which the enlarged and enlightened view of a modern statesman might suggest, we for-

\* A mistake for Edward the First; Edward the Second reigned less than twenty years. See Blackstone's History of the Charters (Oxford, 1759), p. lxxiv. — N.

get that they who obtained these charters were feudal lords, struggling with their feudal sovereign; and that more was, in fact, performed than could be reasonably expected; at all events, they had the obvious merit of resisting oppression, — a conduct that is always respectable, as it always indicates a sense of right and courage.

The exertion of such qualities is of use generally to the existing generation, and still more to posterity. No such steadiness and spirit were shown by the barons of other countries; and this of itself is a sufficient criterion of the merit of the English barons. The plain narrative of these transactions is, of itself, the best comment on their conduct, and its highest praise. That the barons should be jealous of their own powers and comforts, when they found them trenched upon by the monarch, may have been natural; that they should assert their cause by an appeal to arms may have been the character of the age; that they should resist and overpower such princes as Henry or John was, perhaps, what might have been expected. In all this there may possibly not be thought any very superior merit; but there is still merit, and merit of a most valuable kind. To maintain, however, a struggle systematically, and for many succeeding ages, was neither natural, nor the character of the age; and to have encountered and overpowered the rage, the authority, and the ability of a prince like Edward the First, so fitted in every respect to dazzle and seduce, deceive and subdue them, — this constitutes a merit which in other countries had no parallel, and which leaves us no sentiment but that of gratitude, no criticism but that of applause.

But, in addition to these general remarks, one more particular observation must be left with you, and it is this, — that, in the course of these charters, if they are properly examined, it will at length be seen, that *all* the leading objects of national concern were adverted to, that the outlines of a system of civil liberty were actually traced. Provision was made for the protection and independence of the Church; the general privileges of trade were considered; the general rights of property; the civil liberties of the subject; the administration of justice.

It may, indeed, be remarked, that the provisions for general liberty in these charters were few, short, indistinct, and that it is impossible to suppose that a few words like these could in any respect embrace all the multiplied relations of social life and regular government; and that much more must be done before the liberties of mankind can be secured, or even delineated or described with proper accuracy and effect. Where, then, it may again be urged, where is now the value of these celebrated charters? To this it must be replied, that a rude sketch was made, according to the circumstances of the times, and that nothing more could be accomplished or expected; that a reasonable theory, that the right principle, was everywhere produced and enforced, and that this was sufficient. Posterity



was left, no doubt, to *imitate* those who had gone before, by transfusing the general meaning of the whole into statutes, accommodated to the new exigencies that might arise. It was not necessary that they who were to follow should tread precisely in the same steps; but they were to bear themselves erect, and walk after the same manner. The track might be altered, but the port and the march were to be the same. Such, indeed, was the event. In Hampden's cause of ship-money, and on every occasion, when the liberties of the subject were to be asserted, — in writing, in speeches, in Parliament, in the courts of law, — these charters were produced, examined, and illustrated; and they supplied the defenders of our best interests at all times with the spirit and the materials of their virtuous eloquence. Civil liberty had got a creed which was to be learned and studied by its votaries; a creed to which the eyes of all were to be turned with reverence; which the subject considered as his birthright; which the monarch received from his predecessors as the constitution of the land; which the one thought it his duty to maintain, and which the other thought it no derogation to his dignity to acknowledge.

"It must be confessed," says Hume, "that the former articles of the Great Charter contain such mitigations and explanations of the feudal law as are reasonable and equitable; and that the latter involve *all* the chief outlines of a legal government, and provide for the equal distribution of justice, and free enjoyment of property, — the great objects for which political society was at first founded by men, which the people have a perpetual and unalienable right to recall, and which no time, nor precedent, nor statute, nor positive institution ought to deter them from keeping ever uppermost in their thoughts and attention."

At the close of the subject, though he resumes his natural hesitation and circumspection, he seems considerably subdued by the merit of the actors in these memorable transactions.

"Thus," says he, "after the contests of near a whole century, and those ever accompanied with violent jealousies, often with public convulsions, the Great Charter was finally established, and the English nation have the honor of extorting, by their perseverance, this concession from the ablest, the most warlike, and the most ambitious of all their princes. . . . Though arbitrary practices often prevailed, and were even able to establish themselves into settled customs, the validity of the Great Charter was never afterwards formally disputed; and that grant was still regarded as the basis of English government, and the sure rule by which the authority of every custom was to be tried and canvassed. The jurisdiction of the Star-Chamber, martial law, imprisonment by warrants from the Privy Council, and other practices of a like nature, though established for several centuries, were scarcely ever allowed by the Eng-



lish to be parts of their constitution. The affection of the nation for liberty still prevailed over all precedent, and even all political reasoning. The exercise of these powers, after being long the source of secret murmurs among the people, was in fulness of time solemnly abolished as illegal, at least as oppressive, by the whole legislative authority."

These appear to me remarkable passages to be found in the History of Hume, and I therefore offer them to your notice.

You will find Hallam very decisive in his opinion of the value of this Great Charter. He considers it as the most important event in our history, except the Revolution in 1688, without which its benefits would have been rapidly annihilated.

Before I conclude, I must once more remind you, that it is the general spirit and habits of thinking in a community that are all in all; that charters, and statutes, and judges, and courts of law, are all of no avail for perpetuating a constitution, or even for securing the regular administration of its blessings from time to time,—are all of no avail, if a vital principle does not animate the mass, and if there be not sufficient intelligence and spirit in the community to be anxious about its own happiness and dignity, its laws and government, and those provisions and forms in both which are favorable to its liberties. When this vital principle exists, every defect is supplied from time to time by those who bear rule, and who can never be long or materially at a loss to know what either Magna Charta or the free maxims of our constitution require from them. However complicated may be the business, however *new* the situations for which they have to provide, the outline of a free constitution, though rude and imperfect, can easily be filled up by those who labor in the spirit of the original masters.

When this is honorably done, and when the spirit and vital principle of a constitution are faithfully preserved, those who rule and those who are governed may and do sympathize with each other. They are no longer drawn out and divided into ranks of hostility, open or concealed; there is no storm above ground, no hollow murmuring below. The public good becomes a principle, acknowledged by the monarch as his rule of government; and loyalty is properly cherished by the subject, as one of the indispensable securities of his own political happiness. Men are taught to respect each other, and to respect themselves. The lowest man in society is furnished with his own appropriate sentiment of honor, which in him, as in his superiors, is to protect and animate his sense of duty; he, too, like those above him, has his degradations of character to which he will not stoop, and his elevations of virtue to which he must aspire. This is that real protection to a state, that source of all national prosperity, that great indispensable auxiliary to the virtue and even the religion of a country, which may well be considered as the

mark of every good government, for it constitutes the perfection of the best.

But all this must be the work, not of those who are placed low in the gradations of the social order, but of those who are destined, by whatever advantages of property, rank, and particularly of *high* office, to have authority over their fellow-creatures; of such men, men like yourselves, it is the bounden duty to cherish the constitutional spirit of their country, and, in one word, to promote and protect the respectability of the poor man. When those who are so elevated use to such purposes the influence and the command which do and ought to belong to them, they employ themselves in a manner the most grateful to their feelings, if they are men of benevolence and virtue, — the most creditable to their talents, if they are men of genius and understanding.

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## LECTURE VII.

### FRANCE.

WE must now turn to the French history. The period which we may consider is that which intervened between the accession of Philip of Valois and the death of Louis the Eleventh. This period I would wish particularly to recommend to your examination, for it is the most important in the constitutional history of France.

I have already endeavoured to draw your attention to this great subject, — the constitutional history of France. There are few that can be thought of more consequence in the annals of modern Europe. Had France acquired a good form of government while the feudal system was falling into decay, the character of the French nation would have been very different from what, in the result, it afterwards became. All the nations on the continent would have been materially influenced in their views and opinions by such an example. The whole history of France and of those countries would have been changed, and the private and public happiness of the world would have been essentially improved.

The first and great subject of inquiry, therefore, in the French history, is this, — What were the circumstances that more particularly affected the civil liberties of France?

It is quite necessary to remark, that this subject is never properly treated by the French historians. They never seem to feel its im-



portance, to understand its nature. When they advert to the state of France, when they endeavour to consider how the country is to be improved, how advanced to perfection, they content themselves, as their orators seem to have done in the States-General, with vague declamations about order and virtue, and the discharge of the duties of life; a love of his people must, they think, be found in the sovereign, purity of morals in his subjects. These are the topics on which they harangue. Every political good, they suppose, is to result from the private and individual merits of the monarch and those whom he is to govern. They look no further. It seems never to have occurred to them, that the virtues which they wish for, both in the prince and the subject, are generated by a free government, and that it is in vain to expect them under any other.

From this general observation on the French writers one illustrious exception must be made, — the Abbé de Mably. His work must, therefore, be continually compared with the representations of the historians Velly, Mézeray, and Le Père Daniel. It is in his work, and in his alone, that the philosophy of the French history can be found. Without it an English student would pass through the whole detail, continually misled by his guides, or suffered to move on without once finding his attention properly directed to the great misfortune of France, — the misfortune of her political system, — the decline and the destruction of her constitutional liberties.

This subject has not been overlooked by our own great historian, Robertson. In his introduction to his History of Charles the Fifth, he describes, in a concise and unaffected manner, the means by which the prerogative and the power of the crown were extended, and the alteration that took place in the constitution and government so unfavorable to the general liberty of the subject; the fatal manner in which the ancient national assemblies lost their legislative power, and in which the monarch gradually assumed it, and still more fatally assumed the power of levying taxes. There are three notes (38, 39, 40) particularly worth reading, in his preface to Charles the Fifth.

With respect to the constitution of France, the great point in that constitution was, as it has been in all the European constitutions, simply this, — whether the national assemblies could maintain their importance, and, above all, preserve their right of taxation. On this right of taxation every thing depended.

To the general principles of liberty a nation is easily made blind, or can even become indifferent. Such principles are never understood by the multitude; and the interest they excite is of a nature too refined and generous to animate the mass of mankind either long or deeply. But, fortunately for them, they who trample upon their rights generally (as it would be expressed by the people themselves) want their money; and here, at least, is found a coarser string, which



can always vibrate strongly and steadily. The tax-gatherer can, at all events, be discovered by the people to be an enemy, as they suppose, to their happiness. Popular insurrections have seldom had any other origin; and the unfeeling luxury of the great is thus sometimes most severely punished by the headlong and brutal fury of the multitude. Patriots and legislators are, therefore, the most successfully employed, when they are fighting the ignorant selfishness of the low against the vicious selfishness of the high, — when they are exchanging tax for privilege, and purchasing what is, in fact, the happiness of both, by converting the mean passions of each to the purposes of a generous and enlightened prudence. But to do this, it is necessary that some body of men who can sympathize with the people should have a political existence, and that their assent should be necessary to make taxation legal. Of peaceful, regular, constitutional freedom, which is the only freedom, this is the best and the only practical safeguard.

You must now recall to your minds what I have already said of the French history, — that the great writers are too voluminous, and that you must, therefore, meditate the incidents that appear in the abridgments of Hénault and Millot, or the concise history of D'Anquetil; and, when they seem likely to be of importance, consult, if you please, the great historians.

An instance of this kind occurs early in the period we are now considering. You will see in the abridgments that the States-General assemble; an important circumstance always. You will turn to Mably, and you will find that a very remarkable struggle, as he conceives, took place between the crown and the people; and you might here, therefore, turn to Velly and the regular historians. The fact seems to be, that a great crisis in the French constitution did really take place during the reigns of the earlier princes of the house of Valois, particularly of John, when the country was oppressed by the successful and unjust inroads of our Edward the Third. The States-General were called; and the opportunity was taken by the third estate, and more particularly by Marcel, the Parisian, and his associates, to raise the public into importance, and to balance, or, as the French historians represent it, to overpower, the authority of the prince.

Here, then, is evidently a period that cannot be too deeply meditated. The historian Villaret, the successor of Velly, seems to have taken due pains with this part of his undertaking. Le Père Daniel appears, unfortunately, to have no just apprehension of its importance, and, indeed, not to be animated by any principles of legislation and government sufficiently favorable to the rights of the people. The political sentiments of Mézeray are more accurate; but he is too concise in his narrative, and too sparing of his observations. These are the great historians. But the Abbé de Mably is well aware how

important to the liberties of France was the conduct of the States-General on this occasion; and he states, explains, and criticizes their views and their feelings apparently with great penetration and propriety. The student will contrast these writers with each other, and form his own estimate of these memorable transactions.

The narrative in Velly or Villaret opens with a history of the States-General, to which there seems nothing to object. But the moment the historian arrives at the particular point we are considering, his inadequacy to the subject appears. He speaks of the third estate as having gradually learned to discuss the rights and encroach on the limits of the royal authority; and their efforts to improve the constitution by managing the taxation, and by bargaining for the reformation of various abuses, *he calls the first essay of a power usurped*. He observes that many writers have seen a parallel between these transactions and those of the English at Runnymede; and he therefore very properly gives an estimate of all those proceedings in our own country. When this estimate is considered, the parallel is, no doubt, most striking and complete; the requisitions of the States and the concessions of each party seem all of the same nature as those between our own King John and his barons.

I must now mention, that, in the first course of lectures which I delivered, I went through many particulars of this remarkable struggle, drawing my narrative from Velly and the Abbé de Mably; but I begin to doubt whether I may not hope to employ your time better. I am not sure that I then made, or that any effort of mine could possibly make, a detail of this kind sufficiently intelligible; all that I believe you would carry away from the lecture, if I were to repeat it, would be a general impression that there was in this part of the French history a constitutional struggle worth your attention, and that you must consider it for yourselves in the Abbé de Mably. This would be the right impression, no doubt; but I may, perhaps, produce this impression sufficiently by simply assuring you, without any further occupation of your time, that this is the case, and that you must meditate this period well. Do not regard the slight manner in which you may see it mentioned in French authors. You can easily conceive what an event it would have been to Europe and mankind, if the French nation had, like our own, obtained a free government; and from what you have yourselves heard and remember of the affairs of the world, for these last five-and-twenty years, this subject of the free constitution of France will only derive a new and more effective interest.

The contest in the reign of King John of France has distinct stages, in some of which it resembles the struggle between our own King John and the barons; in others, the struggle between Charles the First and his Parliament; and at length it assumes an appearance precisely the same which it did in the frightful and disgraceful periods



of the late French revolution, — every thing at the disposal of the multitude, and even the outrages carried on in a manner very similar, — the Dauphin's officers murdered in his presence, and the party-colored cap placed upon his head, as was, in a similar irruption into the palace, the *bonnet rouge* on the head of the late most amiable and most unfortunate monarch, Louis the Sixteenth. The result was but too certain: either the erection of some military despotism, or the restoration of their ancient government, returning with all its abuses, and more than ever confirmed in its faults and errors. Either event would necessarily have been destructive of all rational liberty. The latter took place. And here may be said to have ended all the more regular, and therefore more hopeful, efforts for the constitution of France.

The great mistake seems to me to have been, that charters were not continually obtained, — one was obtained, — but I mean continually obtained or renewed from time to time, as was done in England. It is impossible that a constitution should be established, or even very thoroughly improved, *at once*, by the laws or provisions of any *one* body of men; and the provisions that were made for this purpose by our own ancestors at Runnymede seem to have been for a long time but too ineffectual. But a charter often renewed or improved may long remain and always be remembered, and in this manner teach those who succeed the duties that have been performed by those who went before them, till freedom becomes at last interwoven with the general habits of thinking in a community, and may then be converted into the effective law of the land.

We cannot now, as I have just observed, trace all the causes of this calamitous alteration in the prospects of France. The kingdom was most dreadfully situated: in a state of hostility with a victorious enemy; troops of soldiers, who acknowledged no law and no country, pillaging what the ravages of war had not entirely swept away; and soon after, the horrible insurrection of the Jacquerie, described by Froissart, the peasants against the nobles; all uniting to complete a combination of horrors which no civilized country ever before or since exhibited.

That the deputies from distant parts should, in circumstances like these, be unwilling or unable to meet in the capital, — that the moderate and the good should no longer be disposed to projects of reform, should easily fall away from their more ardent associates, should even be wanting in their duties as patriots and as men, should no longer prosecute the tasks of hope amid these scenes of despair, — all this can surely be surprising to no one. Nor can we wonder, in a country thus situated, at the failure of any generous experiment for its liberties, when such experiments, it is but too evident, must always depend for their success, not only on the merit of those who engage in them, but on something of good fortune in the conjuncture of circumstances in which they are attempted.



It is impossible, therefore, to read this particular portion of the French history without sensations of the most painful kind. However imperfect might be the character of Marcel and his associates, some great effort was on this occasion evidently made for the democratic part of the constitution of France. It failed; and as we read the history, we are left with an impression on our minds, that the French sovereigns will, from this time, endeavour to carry on the administration of the government without the assistance of any representative assemblies, that is, without any control or check on their own power, — or, in other words, that the people are henceforward to be oppressed, and the sovereign to be, by his very situation, corrupted: a state of things disgraceful to both, and even dangerous; dangerous, because, whenever any system of policy is arranged in any manner directly opposed to the reason and feelings of mankind, it can never be in a state of safety. Nothing is really secure that is not in harmony with the great and established moral feelings of the human heart. The slightest accident may give occasion to the most violent efforts for its overthrow; and such efforts are likely to be attended with the destruction of, at least, all those who were too exclusively benefited by a disposition of things in itself unnatural and unjust.

Considerations, indeed, of this remote and contingent nature, I grieve to say, are little likely to influence the rulers of mankind, or the higher orders. General principles like these may slumber (if I may be allowed the expression) for centuries, and then be roused into action in an instant. Mankind, on these occasions, stand astonished at what has been long foreseen to be very possible, by every intelligent reasoner; just as they stand amazed at the first eruption of a volcano, which the philosopher has, from physical appearances, always predicted, in vain protesting against the erection of palaces and villas in situations where they are every moment exposed to be buried in ashes or annihilated by lava.

In this manner, in France, the great national bodies which had existed under Charlemagne, the assemblies of the fields of March and May, were succeeded by no adequate representation of the force of the community; and the States-General that were convened by Philip le Bel and the house of Valois were but imperfect and fading images of their greatness.

In England, on the contrary, the national assemblies never lost their importance; the Witenagemotes were succeeded by Parliaments, these by assemblies of the Lords and Commons in two distinct houses, and the civil liberties of the community were thus, and thus only, saved from destruction.

The States-General of France had been, as we have already intimated, resisted, overcome, and, in fact, disposed of by John and the Dauphin. The latter mounted the throne with the title of Charles the Fifth. In consequence of the late contest, every thing was sub-

mitted to his will. But what was the result? What use did he make of his power? Did it occur to him, that he ought to be a patriot as well as a king; that he should endeavour, not to extinguish, but rather to modify, the power of the States-General; that he should endeavour to establish, by a proper mixture of royal and popular authority, the glory of his own name and the happiness of his subjects; that he should labor to elevate them from the state of ignorance and ferocity in which they were evidently sunk; that he should allow them, if not to exercise power themselves, to delegate their power to others; that he should teach them the feelings of humanity, by admitting them to the exercise of the rights of it? Did considerations of this reasonable nature occur to him? Was it in this manner that this renowned politician was employed, from his first accession to power? Far otherwise. His wisdom was exclusively exerted in confirming and extending the prerogative of the crown, in laboring to destroy the authority of the States, and in deceiving his subjects into that most fatal of all political delusions, that "whate'er is best administered is best"; in persuading them, in contriving that they should persuade themselves, that as he had foiled and overpowered the English by the prudence of his military operations, as he had swept away from the country the banditti by which it was pilaged, as there was no point which he seemed to carry by cruelty or by force, that therefore, in this happier state of things, it was he, the king, who was assuredly the father of his country; and that it was of no consequence what became of the States-General, the right of taxation, the principles of the constitution, or any other right or principle whatever, while Marcel and his Parisian mob were not destroying the public peace, nor the English, the peasants, or the banditti, the public prosperity, — while, in short, all the *effects* of the happiest form of government and the most legitimate authority were produced by the easier exercise of his individual wisdom and experience, benevolence and justice.

Let no nation presume to blame the French for submitting to considerations or acquiescing in reasonings like these. No nation has ever risen superior to delusions so natural and soothing. It is scarcely necessary to say that Charles succeeded in all the objects of his administration; and he and his courtiers contemplated, no doubt, with the most sincere complacency and applause, the dexterity with which he wielded the minds of men to his purposes, and the gradual decay of all those forms and principles in their government which were likely to be offensive or troublesome (as they would have called it) to the influence and authority of the wearer of the crown.

Was it, however, virtuous, was it, after all, wise, in the king and his courtiers, thus to deceive their country and destroy its constitution? The history of the succeeding reign is no testimony in their favor. And as Charles the Wise (for *such* he was denominated), —



as Charles the Wise approached that melancholy period of decay and death, when worldly wisdom is but too apt to appear mistaken folly, the politician discovered that his son was a minor, that the princes of the blood were disunited and ambitious, that the general prosperity of the nation and of his royal house had been left to depend totally on his own personal management and prudence, and that, therefore, every interest that was dear to him, as a father or a king, would, in the event, be thrown into a situation of perplexity and danger, from the moment that he himself expired.

With what sentiments are we to see him summoning his brothers around him, portioning out his authority among them, laboring to provide for the welfare of his child and his kingdom, by the vain expedient of promises and oaths? He had no States-General, no legislative assemblies, whom he had familiarized to their own particular duties, whom he had allowed to exercise along with himself the administration of the public happiness, whom he had taught to see in the royal authority the best security and protection of their own, — he had no guardians like these to whom he could intrust his son, or the helpless, hopeless expedients of oaths and promises had been unnecessary.

“Charles,” says the historian Villaret, “charged his brothers to abolish the impositions he had laid on his subjects, and signed an order for the purpose the very day that he died; occupied,” continues this writer, “with the happiness of the state and the relief of his people even when he was himself on the confines of the tomb!” A base or shallow panegyric, this, in the historian, which would have been better deserved, if the monarch had not robbed that people of their right to tax themselves by discontinuing and destroying their national assemblies.

But on what principle was it that Charles thus remitted his taxes when sinking into the grave? Was he conscious, when too late, of the injury he had done his country by imposing them on his own authority? Did he wish in this manner to attach the people to his child? On either supposition, what a lesson to those who favor the maxims of arbitrary power!

The genius of Charles had been devoted to the establishment of the power of the crown; and the nation who called him *wise*, and the prince to whom he was a father, were soon to reap the effects of what was esteemed his policy, in seeing their country without order and without law, destroyed by the factions of the royal family, and subdued by a foreign invader.

The next reign in the history, the reign of Charles the Sixth, is ushered in by Villaret with the deepest lamentations over the miseries he is going to relate. The king, yet a minor, abandoned, he says, the reins of government to the princes of the blood by turns, — princes whom ambition, he says, and no love to their country, im-



pelled to undertake the administration of government. From whom, it may be asked, were they to have learned this love of their country? From the deceased monarch? He had taught no lessons but those of arbitrary power. From the free constitution of their country? It had been corrupted till it was unfit for the production of patriots.—“The furious people,” says the historian, “were eager for their own destruction, and as little under the control of reason as their unhappy monarch.” What efforts, it may be observed, had ever been made to render them otherwise?—“The corruption,” says the historian, “was deep and general.” It is ever thus, it may be answered, in an arbitrary government; and a frightful spectacle is always presented, whenever, by any accident or calamity, the veil is withdrawn.—“One step more,” he adds, “and France had been lost, or, what is the same thing, had become the province of our eternal rivals.” And so might every kingdom, constituted as France then was. There is no real security against an invading enemy but a government which, by its equitable laws and popular forms, has been incorporated with the habits and opinions and affections of the people.

The earlier part of this reign, the reign of Charles the Sixth, the king who was afflicted with temporary fits of insanity, is interesting, like that of his renowned father, and for a similar reason, a renewal of the contest between the crown and the people. The student should again compare the narrative of Villaret with the philosophic estimate of Mably. The facts are in both the same, yet it is curious to observe how different are the conclusions which we are taught to draw from them by these two different writers. The one conceives, and justly conceives, that the constitution of a great kingdom is seen in these transactions to pass through its changes of trial and settlement; the other finds in them little but the insurrections of a licentious metropolis, encountered and subdued by its lawful, though rapacious, rulers.

I have already intimated to you the inference that is to be drawn from all the past transactions between the crown and the people of France. The same is the inference from all that you are to approach: the difference between cunning and wisdom, between paltry policy and liberal prudence, between mean, jealous, contracted, tricking sagacity, and a pure, enlarged, enlightened benevolence,—the difference between these, and the superiority of the latter to the former, even upon the principles of mere selfish policy, and though the calls of humanity and duty had no claim to be heard.

Observe the conduct and views of all the different actors in the scene, at the period that is now coming before us.

The royal counsellors, the princes of the blood, instead of conforming to the will of the late monarch, and abolishing the impositions, and then summoning the States-General, in order to obtain

a constitutional supply, omitted every measure of this salutary nature, and then found themselves reminded of their duty, and compelled to the performance of it, by the cries and insurrections of the people.

The States-General, in their turn, when assembled, instead of granting liberally, and teaching the crown the real policy of applying to them, — instead of taking, at all events, the opportunity of making some efforts to regain their place in the constitution, appear to have been totally unconscious of their situation, and neither by their kindness to the crown, nor by any spirit of enterprise for the people, to have made the slightest attempt to approve themselves worthy of their trust.

Again, the States were no sooner separated, than the Duke of Anjou once more renewed his attempt to establish arbitrary impositions, that is, once more exposed himself and his royal house to the chances of tumult and insurrection. He was in consequence obliged again to summon the States-General.

Now what was the conduct of the bailliages that were to return their deputies to this assembly? Some of them sent no deputies at all, supposing that they should have no taxes to pay, inasmuch as they had not consented to any; the rest declared, that, after having consulted with their constituents, they were not authorized to consent to any, and were, on the contrary, ordered to announce that they would rather try the hazard of every extremity. In other words, the people of France could not see that the only way to be permanently secure from unreasonable taxation was to tax themselves through the medium of their representative assemblies. They could not discover, that, when the domains of the crown were no longer productive, the monarch had a right to expect some assistance from his subjects. They were occupied only with the care of their own interests, as they supposed, — with their own narrow, and therefore mistaken, views of selfish cunning. Some of these bailliages could not discover that they must all be pillaged and ruined, unless they acted in concert, and unless they at least appeared together in the shape of an assembly; and the whole country, notwithstanding the experience of the last reign, could not, it seems, understand that the public cause would thus be left once more to the insurrections of the metropolis, from which nothing could be expected but anarchy the most savage, if triumphant, or slavery the most desperate, if unsuccessful.

As if to complete the sum total of national folly, the clergy, from whom better might have been expected, considering the superiority of their education, conceived that they were following their own interests by negotiating with the crown and making a separate bargain.

The scene, however, soon miserably changed. A successful ex-



petition against the Flemings and a victorious army enabled the Duke of Burgundy, one of the royal council, to return to Paris and to settle all constitutional discussions by the sword. Every profession and promise to the subject, every agreement that had been made with the States-General at any former period, was set at naught, Paris treated as a conquered city, its citizens drawn out (some of the most respectable) and publicly executed, and its calamities held out as an example to every other description of the people, to prove that the royal authority was not to be resisted, and that their franchises, their customs, and their rights were all to be of no account, when opposed to the sovereign will of the prince.

How far these royal counsellors befriended their own interests, how far they thus protected themselves from the consequences of their own dissensions, by leaving no power to exist which they respected, — how far they thus allowed the people to be even worth their pillaging, by depriving them of the rewards of industry, — how far they thus enabled the country to resist the English, and how far they therefore consulted their own individual consequence, — how far they acted skilfully, even on the most disgusting principles of selfishness and baseness, to say nothing of their duty to their king, their country, their Creator, — how far they were wise, even according to their own unworthy estimate of wisdom, — and how far the late monarch, so renowned for his wisdom, had been wise also, — the student will have ample opportunity of considering, when he comes to survey the melancholy scenes which, in the history of France, are now opening to his view.

These scenes can be little described by the words of a lecture; they cannot be conveyed to a reader even by an historian. They are to be comprised, indeed, under the general terms of "The dissensions between the rival houses of Burgundy and Orléans and the successes of the English." But it is not too much to say, that such was the exasperation of these two great parties in the state, and such the consequences of the inroads of their English invaders, that men seemed no longer to retain the proper characteristics of their nature, and these annals of the French nation present only a continued succession of assassinations, massacres, and executions; and when to these are added the coronation of a foreign enemy (our own Henry the Fifth\*), the long possession of France by the English, the ravage, the desolation, that were the attendants of such domestic and foreign war, the whole forms together a darkened scene, which no human being, of whatever nation, can now contemplate without the most perfect affliction and horror; the very historian might adopt the words of our great dramatic poet: —

"Alas, poor country!  
Almost afraid to know itself! — where nothing,  
But who knew nothing, was once seen to smile;

\* Henry the Sixth, crowned at Paris, December 17, 1431. *L'Art de vérifier les Dates* (Paris, 1818), Tom. vi. p. 89, Tom. vii. p. 145. See also the historians generally. — N.

Where sighs, and groans, and shrieks that rent the air  
 Were made, not marked, — the dead man's knell  
 Was there scarce asked, for who; and good men's lives  
 Expired before the flowers in their caps,  
 Dying or ere they sickened."

The lesson of the whole I have intimated to you, and I proceed to other considerations. — Our own Henry the Fifth had been crowned king of France in the French capital; yet was France at last, after a bloody conflict of thirty years, enabled to expel the English; and one acceptable conclusion from the whole may at length be drawn, — that a country is never to be despaired of, and that the disadvantages of invaders are so permanent and irremediable, that, in any tolerable comparison of strength, all foreign invaders must, sooner or later, meet with their just overthrow, if a suffering nation can but endure its trial. From such sufferings, however, in this instance of France, there was one result, and that of the most melancholy nature: the constitution of France was lost.

After the decease of the unhappy Charles the Sixth, whom we have just mentioned, the English were expelled by his son, Charles the Seventh. Charles the Seventh is the monarch who was crowned by the Maid of Orléans, a heroine in the recital of whose noble and matchless exploits history appears to be converted into romance, and whose merits were so great as to be thought supernatural by her contemporaries. But the enemies of France were no sooner driven from her fields, than the prerogatives of the crown were necessarily strengthened, and a far more fatal, because a far more lasting, enemy than the English succeeded in the person of the sovereign himself, in the person of Charles the Seventh. Here was again another instance of the still recurring ill fortune of the constitution of France. How was the nation to resist a prince whom they had themselves rescued from the English, and whom *they*, rather than any spirit of enterprise in his own nature, had enabled to win his crown? What blessing could now be made either desirable or intelligible to Frenchmen, but that of peace and repose? What could there be of alarm or terror in the prerogative of the crown, to those who had seen an invader on the throne? Before the ministers of the power of Charles, to the afflicted imagination of the French people, must have walked the spectres of their slaughtered countrymen, and the frowning warriors of England; and slavery itself, if it was not foreign slavery, must to *them* have appeared a state of happiness and triumph.

That fatal measure, fatal for the liberties of his country, was now taken by Charles the Seventh, by which his reign must be for ever distinguished, — the establishment of a military force, and the allotment of a perpetual tax for the support of it, unchecked by any representative assembly. This military force and tax might not be formidable in their first appearance; but, the principle once admit-



ted; both the force and the tax were easily advanced, step by step, to any extent that suited the views of each succeeding monarch. Excuses, and even reasonable considerations (reasonable to those who see not the importance of a precedent and a principle), can never be wanting on these occasions: they were not wanting on this.

It should be observed, that this vital blow to the real greatness of France was introduced as a reform. If any of those who were living at the time had spoken of the probable *consequences* of such a precedent, and had insisted upon its danger to the best interests of their country, they would only have been disregarded or suspected of disloyalty. But no stronger instance can be given, if any were necessary, of the importance of a principle at all times; a precedent may not be often carried into all its consequences, when *favorable* to the liberties of a country, but it always is, when it is otherwise.

Even in a French historian like Villaret, the detail of this great measure is very instructive. It is very instructive to see the manner in which a nation, from a sense of present uneasiness, forgets, as it is always disposed to do, all its more remote and essential interests; and the more this memorable transaction could be examined, the more complete and striking would, no doubt, be found the lesson which it affords.

When this military force and tax had been once established, and both removed (which is the important point) entirely from all check and control by any other legitimate authority in the state, the power of the crown had no more tempests to encounter; no further contest appears in the succeeding reigns; the person of the king might be insulted or endangered, but not the royal authority. We hear of no more struggles for the privileges of the people, and for the right of taxation, — no more important meetings of the States-General; all hope, at least all assertion, of constitutional liberty was at an end; and the contentions of the great, who were alone left to contend, were directed solely to the questions of their own personal ambition.

If any hope for France yet remained, it expired under the reign of Louis the Eleventh, the son and successor of Charles. This prince was of all others the most fitted to destroy the liberties of his country: penetrating, sagacious, cautious, well considering the proportion between his means and his ends; a finished dissembler of his own interests and passions, and a skilful master of those of others; decisive, active, and entirely devoid of principle and feeling. The nobles made an ineffectual effort to retain some of that political power which, if they lost it, was destined, all of it, to fall entirely into the possession of the crown; and this effort was made in the War for the Public Good, as they affected to call it. But Louis contrived to cajole, overpower, or yield to the purposes of his ambition the king of England, the Duke of Burgundy, and the Swiss. He increased

the standing army, raised the *taille* to the most enormous amount, made this tax a step to the introduction of other imposts, reunited many important fiefs to the crown; and, if men could acquire glory by the successful enterprises of ungenerous ambition, — if happiness could be the consequence of cruelty and oppression, deceit and fraud, — if any treasures or any possessions could be compared with the consciousness of being loved and respected, — then, indeed, Louis the Eleventh might have been thought the renowned, the powerful, and the happy; and this detestable tyrant might have been held up by courtiers and courtly writers as the envy of all succeeding monarchs. A different conclusion is, however, to be drawn from the picture of his life and character, which, fortunately, has been exhibited to us by Philip de Comines, a faithful and confidential minister, who knew him thoroughly, and who appears even to have been attached to his person and memory, in defiance of his better judgment, by the influence of the kind treatment which he had personally received from him, as his master.

The king, it seems, successful in his intrigues, unresisted in his oppressions, and with nothing further to apprehend from his rivals or his enemies, was at last admonished of the frailty of all human grandeur by messengers far more ominous and dreadful than the couriers and officers that announce the miscarriage of ambitious projects or the defeats of invading armies; he was seized by a first and then a second fit of epilepsy, so violent and long, that he lay without speech, and apparently without life, till his attendants concluded that he was no more. To life, indeed, he returned, but all the comforts of existence were gone for ever. "The king returned to Tours," says the historian Comines, (I quote his own artless words,) "and kept himself so close, that very few were admitted to see him; for he was grown jealous of all his courtiers, and afraid they would either depose or deprive him of some part of his regal authority. He did many odd things, which made some believe his senses were a little impaired; but they knew not his humors. As to his jealousy, all princes are prone to it, especially those who are wise, have many enemies, and have oppressed many people, as our master had done. Besides, he found he was not beloved by the nobility of the kingdom, nor many of the commons, for he had taxed them more than any of his predecessors, though he now had some thoughts of easing them, as I said before; but he should have begun sooner. Nobody was admitted into the place where he kept himself but his domestic servants, and his archers, which were four hundred, some of which kept constant guard at the gate, while others walked continually about to prevent its being surprised. Round about the castle he caused a lattice, or iron gate, to be set up, spikes of iron planted in the wall, and a kind of crow's-feet, with several points, to be placed along the ditch, wherever there was a possibility for any person to



enter. Besides which, he caused four watchhouses to be made, all of thick iron, and full of holes, out of which they might shoot at their pleasure, in which he placed forty of his crossbows, who were to be upon the guard night and day. He left no person of whom he had any suspicion either in town or country, but he sent his archers not only to warn, but to conduct them away. To look upon him, one would have thought him rather a dead than a living man. No person durst ask a favor, or scarce speak to him of any thing. He inflicted very severe punishments, removed officers, disbanded soldiers."

Such is the picture of the historian. The tyrant of the poet is described only more concisely: —

"He had lived long enough: his way of life  
Was fallen into the sear, the yellow leaf:  
And that which should accompany old age,  
As honor, love, obedience, troops of friends,  
He could not look to have; but, in their stead,  
Curses, not loud, but deep, mouth-honor, breath,  
Which the poor heart would fain deny, but dare not."

By clothes more rich and magnificent than before, — by passing his time in subjecting those around him to every variety of fortune, to the changes of his smile and of his frown, — by filling distant countries with his agents, to purchase for him rarities, which, when brought to him, he heeded not, — by every strange and ridiculous expedient that his uneasy fancy could devise, — by all this idle bustle and parade of royalty and power, did this helpless, wretched man endeavour to conceal from the world and himself the horrid characters of death which were visible on his frame, the fearful handwriting which had told him that his kingdom was departing from him. In vain did he send for the holy man of Calabria, and, on his approach, "fall down," says the historian, "upon his knees before him, and beg him to prolong his life." In vain was the holy vial brought from Rheims, the vest of St. Peter sent him by the Pope. "Whatever was thought conducive to his health," says Philip de Comines, "was sent to him from all corners of the world." "His subjects trembled at his nod," he observes, "and whatever he commanded was executed." But it was in vain. He could indeed "command the beggar's knee," but not "the health of it"; and, suspicious of every one, — of his son-in-law, his daughter, and his own son; having turned his palace into a prison for himself, — into a cage, not unlike those which in his hours of cruelty he had made for others; insulted by his physician, and considered by his faithful minister as expiating, by his torments in this world, the crimes which, as he says, would otherwise have brought down upon him the punishments of the Almighty in the next, this poor king, for such we are reduced at last to call him, expired in his castle, a memorable example, that, whatever be the station or the success, nothing can com-

pensate for the want of innocence, and that, amid the intrigues of cunning and the projects of ambition, the first policy which is to be learned is the policy of virtue.

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## LECTURE VIII.

### SPAIN, ITALY, GERMANY, SWITZERLAND.

IN my last lecture I endeavoured to call your attention to the constitutional history of France. I did so, because this is one of the first objects of importance in the history of Europe, from the effects which that great kingdom has always been fitted, from its situation and natural advantages, to produce upon every other. Such must always have been the influence of its arms and its example, that it is not too much to say, that the history of the civilized world would have been changed, and most favorably changed, if France had not lost its constitutional liberties, and sunk into an arbitrary monarchy.

But the same subject is of great interest to ourselves, from the illustration which it affords of the merits and the good fortune of our ancestors. This island lost not its liberties in like manner, because it retained its public assemblies, and because they retained the right of taxation.

How, therefore, or why, arose this difference in the fate of the two kingdoms?

It is this question that I am so anxious that you should bear along with you in your thoughts, while you read the annals of every other country of Europe; and the more strongly to impress it on your minds, I pointed out to you, in my last lecture, a very remarkable epoch in the French history, during which there was evidently some great effort made for the constitution of France by the members of the States-General, and particularly by the third estate, and by Marcel and the Parisians. I next alluded to those parts of the subsequent reigns, when the liberties of that country were more slowly undermined, but not less fatally attacked, particularly during the times of Charles the Seventh and Louis the Eleventh.

De Mably will always apprise you, by the tone and nature of his observations, what are the transactions and what the periods of importance; and these you should examine, through all their detail, in some of the great French historians: I have found the History of Velly the most elaborate and complete. I must remind you, that



the constitutional history of France is noticed by Robertson, in his introduction to *Charles the Fifth*, and his text is accompanied by three valuable notes, the thirty-eighth, thirty-ninth, and fortieth.

But the same question which I have thus recommended to you, with respect to France and England, an inquiry into their constitutional histories, may be extended to the other kingdoms of Europe; and we have hitherto said nothing of Spain, a country which, like England, might have obtained a free and mixed government, as the elements of its constitution were originally similar (monarchy, feudal lords, and national assemblies), but which, like France, from various untoward circumstances, lost its liberties, and has had to descend, through different stages of degradation, at last almost to extinction and ruin.

I must repeat to you, before we advert to Spain, that it is only by inquiries of this sort into the histories of other countries that you can learn properly to understand how slowly a good government can be formed, — by what attention and anxiety it can alone be maintained, — what are the exact points of difficulty in the formation of a good government, — and the manner (often the singular and unexpected manner) in which these difficulties are evaded, or modified, or overcome, more particularly in your own.

But to allude, as we have proposed, to the history of Spain. — In the fifth volume of Gibbon may be found an account of the introduction of the Moors into that country, of their settlement there, and of the magnificence of their caliphs; and to him I refer. An estimate is also given of the science and knowledge of this remarkable people; and at first we might be tempted to conclude, that, in the general darkness and barbarity of Europe, the light of civilization and learning was destined to issue from the Mahometan capital of Córdoba. But the science and knowledge of these Arabians, when more nearly examined, lose much of their importance; and the nature of their government was little fitted, however accompanied by science and the arts, to build up, either in Spain or in other countries, the fabric of human happiness. Unfortunately, too, it happened that a long succession of bloody struggles was to ensue between the Christians and the Moors; and all hope that the progress of society should be exemplified in Spain became on that account extremely feeble. There is something in these wars between the Christians and the Moors that has a sound of heroism and romance, well fitted to awaken our interest and curiosity. But I know not that these sentiments can now be gratified, or extended, beyond the poetry and the legends by which they have been inspired.

The great historian of Spain is Mariana, who “has infused,” says Gibbon, “into his noble work the style and spirit of a Roman classic. After the twelfth century, his knowledge and judgment may,” he observes, “be safely trusted; but he adopts and adorns the most absurd

of the national legends, and supplies from a lively fancy the chasms of historical evidence." Roderick Ximenes — not the statesman, though also an archbishop of Toledo — is the father of Spanish history; yet he did not live till five hundred years after the conquest of the Arabs; and the earlier accounts are, it seems, very meagre. But the work of Mariana, with the continuation of Miniana, consists of four volumes, folio, and will now be more often mentioned than consulted, and consulted than read. There is an English translation of it.

I must, therefore, observe, that great diligence appears to have been employed on this portion of history by the authors of the Modern History; and the Spanish historians Mariana, Ferreras, Roderick, and others, are continually referred to. The student may, therefore, consider the subject as placed within his reach by the detail which he will find in the sixteenth and seventeenth volumes of the Modern History. But it is a detail which, however great may be its interest in chivalry and romance, he will never read; and he will probably cast over it that passing glance with which we may consent to survey such sanguinary scenes in the history of mankind. In Mr. Gibbon's Outlines, published in the second volume of his Memoirs, there are a few notices of this part of the Spanish history, which will enable the student to hasten through the narrative in the Modern History with the least possible expenditure of his time.

In the eleventh century, the Christian princes, who had fallen back upon the most northern parts of the kingdom, advanced southward. They were encouraged by the intestine divisions of the Mahometans, who had now for a few centuries exhibited their superiority in war and their magnificence in peace.

The siege of Toledo, and the exploits of the Spanish general, Don Rodrigo Diaz de Bivar, form the next objects of attention. Rodrigo is the Cid whom history, and still more the muse of Corneille, have consigned to immortality. There has been a history of the Cid lately published by Mr. Southey.

The great battle of Tolosa, from which the Moors never recovered, and their subsequent stand in the kingdom of Granada, are the next points of importance. About this time, also, flourished the king Alphonso, who is remembered rather for his taste and knowledge of astronomy than for the superiority of his talents in government.

For some time the Mahometan kingdom of Granada, and the four Christian monarchies of Castile, Aragon, Navarre, and Portugal, were distinguished from each other, each retaining its respective laws and limits; and the conclusion of the whole is the union of the crowns of Castile and Aragon under Ferdinand and Isabella, and the defence, capitulation, and expulsion of the Moors.

Both the Christians and Moors, in the course of this great contest, had similar advantages and impediments: friends and allies



behind them ; intestine divisions ; personal bravery and love of glory, and the animation of religious and political rage. But the north of Spain was more fitted than the south to produce active and hardy warriors. Among the Christians, the warlike ardor of chivalry was advancing or at its height : on the contrary, the enthusiasm of the followers of Mahomet had now spent itself in conquest, and the fiercer passions of their nature were lost in the blandishments of pleasure ; riches and luxury had probably abated their fierceness without adding proportionably to their skill in the science of war : and, finally, the Spaniards were fighting for a country of which they must have considered themselves as the rightful possessors.

The narrative of Gibbon and the detail of the authors of the Modern History will gradually conduct the student to the observations of Dr. Robertson in his introductory volume to the History of Charles the Fifth. From the researches of this excellent historian, he will find, that, notwithstanding the conquests of the Moors and the long struggles which had followed, a situation of things obtained similar to what he has observed in other parts of Europe, and therefore containing some promise of subsequent prosperity and freedom. The Gothic manners and laws still survived, from the tolerance of the Moorish conquerors ; the provinces of Spain, having been slowly wrested from the Moors, were divided among military leaders ; and the feudal lord in no country appeared more powerful and independent.

The same causes which gave rise to the cities in other parts of Europe were assisted in Spain by circumstances peculiar to itself ; — these are well explained by Robertson ; — and in this manner we arrive at the same great distinctions of policy, — a limited monarch, feudal lords, the Cortes or national assembly, and of that assembly the towns making *a constituent part*. The spirit of the people was high, and the love of liberty great ; and they who have a pleasure in seeing the democratic part of a mixed government strongly predominant may consider the very remarkable institution of the Justiza or the supreme judge of Aragon ; they may see, at the same time, the high prerogatives which the Aragonese Cortes possessed ; — so that in this manner was realized all that could well be proposed in theory by those who are disposed to rest a government very much on a popular basis.

The justiza was in reality the guardian of the people, and, when necessary, the controller of the prince ; and every precaution, as far as we can now judge, seems to have been adopted, the better to control in his turn the justiza himself, and to provide against the powers of this singular representative of the general interests of the community. The Aragonese Cortes themselves were also as proud in principle and as strong in power as could be wished by the most popular reasoner. The compact, for instance, between the king and

his barons is supposed to have been thus expressed: — “ We, who are each of us as good, and who are altogether more powerful than you, promise obedience to your government, if you maintain our rights and liberties ; if not, not.” Finally, it must be observed, that the attachment of the Aragonese to this singular constitution of government is said to have approached to superstitious veneration, and to have reconciled them to their consciousness of poverty, and to the barrenness of their country.

It were to be wished that more information could be procured with respect to these remarkable institutions and their effects. It should seem, however, that the obvious difficulties occurred. It is easy to dispose of power, but not therefore easy to make a good government, not therefore to render power so disposed either salutary or even harmless. The justiza might be made the supreme judge of the concerns both of the king and of the nobles ; but who, then, was to appoint the justiza, — who afterwards to censure or control him ? Or the nobles might be supreme ; but by whom, then, were the nobles to be restrained ? And how was it to be expected, that, in either case, the monarch either could or ought to be contented and at rest ? What, after all, seems to have been the result ? A continued struggle, open or concealed.

In 1264, the nobles insisted that the king should not nominate the justiza without their consent. This was, in fact, to assume the whole power to themselves ; for he whose consent is necessary to an appointment appoints. Before this time the justiza had been nominated by the choice, and held his office at the pleasure, of the king ; but this last circumstance was to make the justiza not a little useless, and to give the real power to the crown. The power of the king was, however, to be corrected, it seems, by the prerogative which the nobles enjoyed, of what was called “ the union,” or of confederating formally and legally to give law to the king. This was, however, only to constitute two powers which were to be in a state of perpetual collision with each other. Afterwards this privilege of the nobles was abolished, as too dangerous to the peace of society ; and then the justiza was continued in office for life. But this was to render *him* the monarch, in the apprehension of the wearers of the crown ; and therefore attempts were perpetually made by the kings to remove such justizas as were obnoxious to them. Subsequently, in 1442, the Cortes ordained that the justiza should not be removed but at their pleasure. Again, so late as 1461 contrivances were adopted to form a tribunal before whom the justiza was to appear and answer for his conduct.

But all these expedients, and all expedients of the kind, are only the efforts of men who are struggling with a difficulty which it is impossible entirely to remove. Events such as we have thus briefly collected from Robertson — and the history itself would, no doubt,



furnish many more, if it had been philosophically written by the Spanish historians — partake, in fact, of the nature of revolutions, — the varying triumphs of contending principles of government; contests which, however natural they may be in any elementary state of society, or however tolerable among those who are accustomed to violence and bloodshed, are the great evils to be avoided, if men are to be rendered happy by the institutions of government, or are supposed to exist in any state of civilization and improvement. To throw the power decidedly into the hands of *one* great magistrate, or of *one* great body of nobles, or of *one* great assembly of the people, is to cut the knot, not to loose it; it is to face and despise all the evils which are most deserving of our alarm and avoidance.

I must observe, that evils and difficulties like these show the value of any constitution already established, where these elementary principles of rivalry are tolerably well improved, and the unspeakable value of any like our own, where they are on the whole well composed.

Among the Castilians, from what little can now be collected of their laws and constitution, the interests of mankind had a better prospect. The Cortes consisted of three estates, and possessed powers analogous to those of our Parliaments in England. But everywhere in Spain, as in other parts of Europe (with the exception of England), the powers of the crown were too limited; the barons enjoyed prerogatives inconsistent with the order, peace, and prosperity of the community. These it was impossible for the monarchs to endure. A constant struggle, secret or avowed, was the consequence; and the question here, as elsewhere, was only, — What was to be the result? How was the power to be hereafter shared? Were the people, or the monarchs, or the nobles, to predominate, and to what extent?

Inquiries of this nature must be followed up through the pages of Robertson, and Watson in his History of Philip the Second, through the reigns of Ferdinand, Charles the Fifth, and Philip the Second. I cannot here enter into such inquiries. I have pointed them out to you.

It is many years since I wrote this lecture, and there has lately appeared a work by Mrs. Calcott, a popular History of Spain, in two octavo volumes. It may be recommended to the student, for the author has made every thing of the subject that was possible. But the truth is, that the subject is impracticable. There are so many Moorish dynasties and Christian dynasties, and the whole is such an intermingled scene of eternal confusion and bloodshed, the heroes and great personages concerned so constantly come like shadows and so depart, that the student can scarcely be required to endeavour to remember the events and the characters that he reads of, for any such attempt would be impossible. He must turn over the pages, one

after another ; he will observe many interesting scenes of a dramatic nature, but he must look more attentively at those subjects which, from what he has read in Gibbon, and heard on different occasions, he may be aware, deserve consideration. Every thing is done by Mrs. Calcott that can be done by good sense and good principles of civil and religious liberty, and by commendable diligence in the collection and display of the materials which her subject supplied ; and the student will see the main points presented to his view, and reasonable observations made, and on the whole feel his mind left in a state of sufficient repose and satisfaction with respect to this portion of his course of historical reading. But it is impossible that his original expectations from this part of history can be gratified, more particularly if he is a person of poetical temperament, and has got his imagination excited by all the enchanting dreams that, by means of ballads, romances, histories, and dramas, are for ever associated with this renowned land of magnificence, chivalry, and love.

Spain has now been added to our former enumeration of Italy and Germany, of France and England. To what country shall we next advert ? We cannot but feel a melancholy interest in the ruins of ancient greatness, in Constantinople and in the Empire of the East ; it is natural, it is fit, that we should cast our eyes on this celebrated city ; and if we have recourse to the History of the Decline and Fall, we shall find that the genius of the historian survives, while the majesty of his subject has expired. It is in vain that we turn to Greece while we are inquiring after the hopes or the interests of the human race. The Eastern Empire is at this period sinking deeper into decline with each succeeding age. Without, are new barbarians, of a strange aspect and hostile religion, pressing forward to accomplish its destruction ; within, are enemies still more formidable, slavery, dissension, and licentiousness ; and no benefit can be expected to be derived to mankind from an empire, a nation, a city, thus gradually reduced, enfeebled, and destroyed, — capable of no generous effort or permanent defence, and every moment descending to a final and merited extinction.

From Constantinople, the Empire of the East, we may turn once more to Rome, so long the capital of the Empire of the West. We may turn to the sixty-ninth and seventieth chapters of Gibbon ; these are very accessible, and appear to me sufficient. In these chapters the historian casts a last look on the original object of his labors, the Roman city, declined and fallen from her height, and no longer mistress of the world ; yet interesting from the monuments which she still retained of heroism and genius, and from the melancholy contrast of present degradation with ancient glory and renown. In these chapters he reviews the state and revolutions of Rome till she finally acquiesced in the absolute power of the Popes ; and from these pages we are enabled to collect very sufficient information on those points which are more immediately deserving of our attention.



But since I wrote this lecture, the work of Mr. Sismondi, his History of the Italian Republics, has appeared, and the work which I have so often alluded to of Mr. Hallam. Along with the chapters of Mr. Gibbon, therefore, I must now propose to you the two chapters of Mr. Hallam on Italy, which should be diligently read. In his note, which you will find very valuable, you will see him speak of the work of Sismondi, and in the following terms:—"The publication of M. Sismondi's *Histoire des Républiques Italiennes* has thrown a blaze of light around the most interesting, at least in many respects, of European countries [Italy] during the Middle Ages. I am happy to bear witness, so far as my own studies have enabled me, to the learning and diligence of this writer: qualities which the world is sometimes apt not to suppose, where they perceive so much eloquence and philosophy." Mr. Hallam then goes on to state why he considers Sismondi as having almost superseded the *Annals of Muratori*, from the twelfth century at least, and only thinks it proper to observe, in the way of criticism, that, "from too redundant details, and sometimes from unnecessary reflections, M. Sismondi has run into a prolixity which will probably intimidate the languid students of our age." This, he says, "is the more to be regretted, because the History of Italian Republics is calculated to communicate to the reader's bosom some sparks of the dignified philosophy, the love for truth and virtue, which lives along its eloquent pages." This is very high praise from Mr. Hallam, no very ready or profuse panegyrist at any time; and my hearer must therefore turn to the volumes that have won such important approbation. I shall not be surprised, however, if he should find himself, after a sight and trial of these fifteen volumes, ready to sink into the class of the languid students of the age; and I sincerely wish I could provide a little against a circumstance which, in the present state of literature and of the world, I do not consider as altogether unnatural.

You will observe, then, that on the fall of the Western Empire, during the first six ages, the Barbarians and degenerate Italians were mixed together, and from this sort of union was to arise a new nation to succeed to the Romans. Different republics appeared in different parts of Italy. To these we are not a little indebted for the preservation of the treasures of antiquity, and, as Sismondi contends, it was in these republics that were laid the foundations of all the subsequent glory and intellectual eminence of Europe. You see, then, at once the subject and the interest of it.

In brief, Italy before the twelfth century was subjected to the Franks, then to the Germans, and then came four centuries of grandeur and glory; during which four centuries, from 1100 to 1530, Italy gave instruction to the rest of Europe in every art, science, and species of knowledge; but in 1530, Italy was overpowered by

Charles the Fifth, and total insignificance has been the result. That is, in the course of the twelfth century, Italy acquired its liberties, enjoyed them during the thirteenth and fourteenth, and lost them soon after the close of the fifteenth. The sixteenth, seventeenth, and eighteenth have since been centuries of slavery, indolence, effeminacy, oblivion.

On the whole, as far as the subject of republics is concerned, you will find your general conclusions, drawn from the example of these Italian republics, much what you would have expected them to be from your classical reading, from your perusal of the annals of the Grecian republics and of Rome: that they reward, and therefore awaken, the faculties of the human mind and the energies of the human character; but that storms, and dissensions, and revolutions are the necessary result. This is confessed by Sismondi himself. The fearful calamities, the dreadful price that is paid for the production of men of great talents! By such men, it may be added, such forms of government are naturally favored, as affording them a theatre on which such talents may be displayed; but whether the general happiness is thus best consulted is quite another question.

Such, then, is the subject of Sismondi's History, — the history of these republics between the fall of the Romans and the establishment of the power of Charles the Fifth. The age of merit unknown, — for the history is unknown, — because it has never been written in any general or summary way, and it is impossible to read the particular details of it.

Now I fear this impossibility neither is, nor ever can be, escaped. Mr. Sismondi has himself attempted it. He has made a small volume, published by Lardner, and it is a failure. I must venture to say, that even now, notwithstanding Mr. Sismondi's eloquence and skill, his love of liberty, and his learning, it is very well for his work that there is a good index everywhere accompanying the original volumes; and I would advise my hearers, and more particularly the languid students, to read and consider well the two chapters of Hallam, and then turn to Sismondi, making full use of his index, which the prior perusal of Hallam will enable him to do.

I must be content in this unworthy manner to dismiss this subject of Italy, and the work of Sismondi; but originally I drew up many pages on the subject of both, particularly of the latter: they, however, began to assume the bulk and appearance of a separate lecture; and I now think it best to leave the student, as I have done, to his own exertions.

Certainly every thing regarding Italy and the character of the Italians is most interesting. They appear to me, even as we now see them, to have intelligence and talents equal to any study; a versatility that would fit them at once for music and painting, for politics and war; an imagination which enables them still to retain



the empire of the fine arts; gentleness of manners, in other countries found only in the upper ranks of society; a sobriety which keeps them safe from any vulgar excess; and on the whole, such gifts and qualities as would insure great national superiority and individual excellence, if proper opportunities could but be afforded them, — opportunities which never were or could be afforded them, from the division of their country into republics, or separate governments, and the impossibility of rescuing them from their inherited antipathies and rivalships.

At the peace of Aix-la-Chapelle, in 1748, Italy might indeed be left to repose, but to repose on the supposition of existing without freedom and national spirit. No provision was made for her liberties and independence. Italy is, therefore, now only a vast museum, where the monuments of the genius of the dead are presented to the admiration of the living. No one asks what the princes and people of Italy are doing; an iron sceptre is extended over them. The intelligent Italian feels that he has no country, and mingles his sighs and regrets, his indignation and his anguish, with the sublime lamentations of the poet of England.

We must now turn to Germany. I must leave Pfeffel to conduct you from the accession of Rodolph to the opening of the History of Robertson. His work may be read with more or less attention, according to the varying importance of the subject-matter. But the first observation that occurs is, that from this era the history of Germany assumes a double aspect, and that our attention must be directed, not only to the Empire itself, but to the rise, growth, and subsequent predominance of the house of Austria. A work has lately been published, executed with every appearance of diligence and precision, by Mr. Coxe, (Coxe's History of the House of Austria,) and furnishing the English reader with a complete account of the political history of that celebrated family. By his labors, and those of Pfeffel and Robertson, we may consider ourselves as furnished with information which we must otherwise have extracted with great pain and labor, if at all, from those documents and historians in different languages to which they refer. These writers will be found to illustrate each other and may be read together, — Pfeffel, Robertson, and Coxe.

Among several details and particulars that belong to this portion of history, and which may be perused, I conceive, somewhat slightly, there are some which should be considered more attentively: the gradual settlement of the constitution of the Empire, as it is noted by Pfeffel, and more especially the Golden Bull of Charles the Fourth. This Golden Bull was the first among the fundamental laws of the Empire, and was published by the emperor, it is to be observed, with the consent and concurrence of the electors, princes, counts, nobility, and *towns imperial*.

But by this famous bull, as by all the prior regulations of the Germanic constitution, the emperor was still left the elective, the limited, and almost the inefficient head of an aristocracy of princes, each of whom seems to have remained the real monarch in his own dominions; and the vast strength and resources of Germany, dissipated and divided among a variety of interests, could at no time, even by the most able princes of the house of Austria, be combined and wielded against the enemies of the Empire with their proper and natural effect.

Apparently, indeed, and on great public occasions, the majesty of the emperor was sufficiently preserved and displayed. The princes and potentates of Germany officiated as his domestics: the Count-Palatine of the Rhine, as his steward, placed the dishes on his table; the Margrave of Brandenburg, as his chamberlain, brought the golden ewer and basin to wash; the king of Bohemia, as his cup-bearer, presented the wine at his repast; and each elector had his appropriate duty of apparent servility and homage.

Such are the whimsical and contradictory scenes of arrogance and debasement, of ostentation and meanness, of grave folly and elaborate inanity, which are produced among mankind, when in a state of civilized society, by the intermingled operation of the various passions of our nature. History is full of them; and private life, as well as public, presents the same motley exhibition of compliments paid by which no one is to be flattered, trouble undertaken by which no one is to be benefited, and artifices practised by which no one is to be deceived.

But we now approach one of the most interesting portions of history, and one that is connected with Germany, and more particularly the house of Austria, — the formation of the Helvetic Confederacy, the growth and establishment of the independence and political consequence of Switzerland.

The historians you are to read are Planta, and Coxe in his *House of Austria*. There is a history by Naylor, who is more ardent than either in his love of liberty, but seems less calm, and less likely to attract the confidence of his reader.

Switzerland is a name associated with the noblest feelings of our nature, and we turn with interest to survey the rise and progress of countries which we have never been accustomed to mention but with sentiments of respect. In the history of the world, it has been the distinction of three nations only to be characterized by their virtue and their patriotism, — the early Romans, the Spartans, and the Swiss. We speak of the splendor of the Persians, of the genius of the Athenians; but we speak of the hardy discipline and the inflexible virtue of Sparta, and of ancient republican Rome, — “the unconquerable mind, and freedom’s holy flame.” So, in modern times, we speak of the treasures of Peru, of the luxuries of India, of the



commerce of Venice or of Holland, and of the arts of France; but it is to Switzerland that we have been accustomed to turn, when, as philanthropists or moralists, we sought among mankind the unbought charms of native innocence, and the sublime simplicity of severe and contented virtue.

More minute examination might possibly compel us to abate something of the admiration which we have paid at a distance; yet our admiration must ever be due to the singular people of Switzerland; and it must always remain a panegyric of the highest kind, to owe renown to merit alone,—to have earned their independence by valor, and to have maintained their prosperity by virtue,—to be quoted as examples of those qualities by which men may be so ennobled, that they are respected, even amid their comparative poverty and rudeness,—to be described as heroes who, though too few to be feared by the weak, were too brave to be insulted by the strong. The student, while he reads the history of Switzerland, finds himself, on a sudden, restored to his earliest emotions of virtuous sympathy, and he will almost believe himself to be once more surrounded by the objects of his classical enthusiasm,—the avengers of Lucretia, and the heroes of Thermopylæ. Insolence and brutality he will see once more resisted by the manly feelings of indignant nature. A few patriots meeting at midnight, and attesting the justice of their cause to the Almighty Disposer of events, the God of equity and mercy, the Protector of the helpless; calm and united, proceeding to the delivery of their country; overpowering, dismissing, and expelling their unworthy rulers, the agents and representatives of the house of Austria, without outrage and without bloodshed; retaining all the serene forbearance of the most elevated reason, amid the energies and the fury of vindictive right; and magnanimously reserving the vengeance of their arms for those of their rulers who should dare to approach them in the field, with the instruments of war and the bloody menaces of injustice and oppression.

Such a trial, indeed, awaited them; but these inimitable peasants, these heroes of a few valleys, were not to be dismayed. They united and confirmed their union by an oath; and if their enemy, as he declared, was determined to trample the audacious rustics under his feet, they would unawed (they said) await his coming, and rely on the protection of the Almighty. Their enemy came; and he came, according to his language in his council of war, to take some by surprise, to defeat others, to seize on many, to surround them all, and thus infallibly extirpate the whole nation. Three separate attacks were prepared, and the Duke Leopold himself conducted the main army; but he was met at the straits of Morgarten by this band of brothers. Like one of the avalanches of their mountains, they descended upon his host, and they beat back into confusion, defeat, and destruction, himself, his knights, and his companions, the disdainful

chivalry, who had little considered the formidable nature of men who could bear to die, but not to be subdued, — men whom Nature herself seemed to have thrown her arms around, to protect them from the invader, by encompassing them with her inaccessible mountains, her tremendous precipices, and all her stupendous masses of eternal winter.

The Three Forest Cantons, five-and-twenty years after the assertion of their own independence, admitted to their union a fourth canton; eighteen years after, a fifth; and soon a sixth, seventh, and an eighth. These eight ancient cantons, whose union was thus gradually formed and perfected in the course of half a century from 1307, were afterwards joined by five other cantons; and the Helvetic Confederacy was thus, in the course of two centuries, finally augmented to a union of thirteen.

But many were the difficulties and dangers through which the cantons had to struggle for their independence, and the strength of the oppressor was more than once collected to overwhelm, in the earlier periods of its existence, this virtuous confederacy. Seventy-one years after the defeat at Morgarten, another Duke of Austria, a second Leopold, with a second host of lords and knights, and their retainers, experienced once more a defeat near the walls of Sempach. But the battle was long suspended. These Austrian knights were unwieldy, indeed, from their armour, but they were thereby inaccessible to the weapons of the Swiss; and as they, too, were brave, and deserved a better cause, they were not to be broken. "I will open a passage," said the heroic Arnold, a knight of Unterwalden: "provide for my wife and children, dear countrymen and confederates; honor my race." At these words, he threw himself upon the Austrian pikes, buried them in his bosom, bore them to the ground with his own ponderous mass, and his companions rushed over his expiring body into the ranks of the enemy; a breach was made in this wall of mailed warriors, and the host was carried by assault.

Such were long the patriots of Switzerland; such they continued to the last. They received privileges and assistance from the Empire, while the Empire was jealous of the house of Austria. The paucity of their numbers was compensated by the advantages of their Alpine country. Their confederacies were artless and sincere, their lives rural and hardy, their manners simple and virtuous; eternally reminded of the necessity of a common interest, every peasant was a patriot, and every patriot a hero. Human prosperity must always be frail, human virtue imperfect; yet we can long pursue their history, though with some anxiety and occasional pain, on the whole, with a triumph of virtuous pleasure.

The most disagreeable characteristic of the people of Switzerland is their constant appearance, as mercenaries, in the armies of foreign countries. In excuse of the Swiss from the natural reproaches of



the reasoners and moralists of surrounding nations, it may be observed, that in a poor country emigration is the natural resource of every man whose activity and talents are above the ordinary level, that the profession of arms was the obvious choice of those who could pretend to no superiority but in the qualities that constitute the military character; that, with respect to the Swiss magistracies, they could have no right to prevent their youth from endeavouring to better their condition; and that, while part of the population was employed in the service of the different monarchies of Europe, — a part which could always be recalled on any urgent occasion, — Switzerland supported, in fact, at the expense of those monarchies, not at its own, the disciplined troops which were necessary to its security and might otherwise have been dangerous to its liberties. It may be added, that their fellow-citizens who remained at home were thus saved from all the vices and calamities which result from the redundant population of every bounded community.

No great legislator ever appeared in Switzerland. The speculatist will find no peculiar symmetry and grace in their systems, and may learn not to be too exclusive in his theories. Times and circumstances taught their own lessons; civil and religious establishments were imperfectly produced, roughly moulded, and slowly improved; and whatever might be their other merits, they were perfectly adequate to dispense the blessings of government and religion to a brave and artless people. The great difficulty with the inhabitants of Switzerland was, at all times, no doubt, to judge how far they were to mix, on the principles of their own security, with the politics of their neighbours; a second difficulty, to keep the states of their confederacy from the influence of foreign intrigue and private jealousy; a third, to make local and particular rights of property and prescription conform to the interests of the whole; and finally, to preserve themselves simple and virtuous; — in a word, publicly and privately “to do justly and to love mercy,” and again, “to keep themselves unspotted from the world.” This was, indeed, a task which perfectly to execute was beyond the compass of human virtue. But with all their frailties and mistakes, their faults and follies, they existed for nearly five hundred years in a state of great comparative independence and honor, security and happiness; and they perished only amid the ruthless and unprincipled invasions of revolutionary France, and the general ruin of Europe.

I must, in my next lecture, turn to the great event of modern history, the Reformation; but, before I do so, I must again remind my hearer, that, since I wrote the lectures I have just delivered, several works have appeared which he must consider with the greatest attention, particularly the work of Mr. Hallam on the Middle Ages. All the subjects that have been glanced at in these earlier lectures are there thoroughly considered by this author with all the patience

of an antiquarian and the spirit and sagacity of a philosopher: the French history, — the feudal system, — the history of Italy, — the history of Spain, — the history of Germany, — of the Greeks and Saracens, — the history of ecclesiastical power, — the constitutional history of England, — the Anglo-Saxon and the Anglo-Norman, — afterwards to the end of the civil wars between the Roses, — with a concluding dissertation on the state of society during the Middle Ages. I should have been saved many a moment of fatigue, some almost of despair, if these volumes had appeared before I began my lectures.

In like manner I have since read, and should have been most happy to have read before, the first volume of the History of England by Sir James Mackintosh. The volume, though it may not be what the common reader may have expected, is totally invaluable to those who have read and thought on the subject before, and who, therefore, can duly estimate the value of the comprehensive estimates of an enlightened and superior understanding. The same, I doubt not, will be the character of the volumes that are to follow.

I have since, too, looked over the three volumes of the History of the Anglo-Saxons by Mr. Turner. I do not think it necessary for the student to read every part with equal attention, or some parts with any; but there is good information to be found in the book, such as he cannot well procure for himself, and may be grateful to Mr. Turner for offering him so completely and so agreeably: what can now be known of Alfred, — more particularly of the sea-kings and sea-banditti of the North, — of the laws, languages, and manners of the Anglo-Saxons, so connected with our own, — their religion and their superstitions, — the constitution of their government, — their kings, — their Witenagemote, — their offices, — their aristocracy and population, — their poetry, literature, and arts. These are all subjects very interesting, and can now be exhibited to a student only by an antiquarian, whose merits he may not be disposed to emulate, and should therefore gratefully acknowledge.

I have also looked at the first volume of the Anglo-Saxon History by Palgrave, which, though interspersed with some trivial remarks, may be read with entertainment and advantage. The second volume, on the rise and progress of the English constitution, will probably be well worthy attention, coming, as it does, from so celebrated an antiquarian.

For the History of Switzerland I have referred to Planta; but there has been lately published a work by Mr. Naylor. Mr. Naylor writes with a much more lively sensibility to the value of popular privileges; but in his work I have been, on the whole, disappointed. His preface is unsatisfactory; he gives no reasons for writing a new history of the Helvetic Confederacy, or statement of the deficiency to be supplied, or the new representations that are to be offered of



events and characters. Mr. Naylor, however, must have been aware that the value both of his own History and that of Mr. Planta must arise from the difficulty of reading the original authors. The dramatic manner, also, it must be observed, in which Mr. Naylor writes, is not fitted to induce the reader to withdraw his confidence from the more regular and sober History of Mr. Planta. Mr. Naylor's work, which reaches down to the peace of Westphalia, must, no doubt, be contrasted with Planta's, when any particular transaction is inquired into; for it is written on more popular principles. But, for the general purposes of historical information, I must still refer to Planta, who seems sufficiently animated with proper sentiments of patriotism and independence, at least while he is describing the origin of the Helvetic Confederacy; and his distaste to popular feelings and forms of government may be suffered to evaporate in notes and observations on the French Revolution, when it is considered how atrocious has been the interference of the French rulers and their emissaries in the concerns of his native country.

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## LECTURE IX.

### THE REFORMATION.

THE subjects to which we adverted in the course of the last lecture would be found, if examined, immediately to introduce us to others of such general importance, that the particular histories of the different states of Europe can now no longer be separately surveyed. These new subjects of such general and extraordinary importance are the Revival of Learning and the Reformation. For the present, therefore, we must leave these particular histories of England, of France, and Germany, and endeavour to familiarize the student to those general remarks which constitute the philosophy of history, and, above all, to induce him to fix his view very earnestly on the events I have just mentioned, the greatest of modern history, — the Revival of Learning and the Reformation.

A few preliminary observations may, however, be suggested to you. In the course of your reading, as you come down from the history of the Middle Ages, you will be brought down to the history of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, and this era, you will perceive, was the era of inventions and discoveries. I allude more particularly to, 1st, the art of turning linen into paper; 2dly, the

art of printing; 3dly, the composition and the application of gun powder, more especially to the purposes of war; 4thly, the discovery of the strange property of the magnetic needle, or at least its general application to the purposes of navigation. The importance of such discoveries will be sufficiently obvious to your own reflections.

To each of these inventions and discoveries belongs an appropriate history highly deserving of curiosity, — of more curiosity, indeed, than can now be gratified, — and each strongly illustrative of the human mind; creeping on from hint to hint, like the Portuguese mariner from cape to cape, owing something to good fortune, but far more, and even that good fortune itself, to enterprise and perseverance. You will see some notice taken of these inventions and discoveries in Koch.

As the study of the Dark Ages conducts us to the ages of inventions and discoveries, so do these last to the era which was marked by the revival of learning and the Reformation. All these periods mingle with each other, the prior with the succeeding one, and no line of demarcation can be traced to separate or define them; yet may they be known, each by its more prevailing characteristic of darkness, discovery, and progress; and as we are now supposed to have passed through the first two, we must next proceed to the last, the era of the revival of learning and the Reformation.

To this era we shall be best introduced by adverting to the general situation of Europe, more particularly by turning to the eastern portion of it; for we shall here be presented with a train of events which, if we could but transport ourselves in imagination to this fearful period, would almost totally overpower us, by appearing to threaten once more, as in the irruption of the Barbarians, the very civilization of society. For what are we here called to witness? The progress of the Turks; the terror of Bajazet; the danger of Constantinople; and then, again, the unexpected appearance of savages still more dreadful than the Turks, — Tamerlane and his Tartars; the extraordinary achievements of these tremendous conquerors; afterwards, the revival of the Ottoman power; and at last, the destruction of the Eastern Empire, of Constantinople itself.

This series of memorable events has been detailed by Mr. Gibbon with that spirit and knowledge of his subject, that compression and arrangement, which so particularly distinguish those chapters of his work where his theme is splendid or important, and which render them so inexhaustible a study to his more intelligent readers. I must refer you to the work, making, however, in the mean time, a few observations.

In contemplating the final extinction of the Eastern Empire, it may be some consolation to us to think that Constantinople did not fall without a blow; that the city was not surrendered without a de-



fence which was worthy of this last representative of human greatness; that the emperor was a hero, and that, amid the general baseness and degeneracy, he could collect around him a few, at least, whom the Romans, whom the conquerors of mankind, might not have disdained to consider as their descendants.

Some melancholy must naturally arise at the termination of this memorable siege, — the extinction of human glory, the distress, the sufferings, the parting agonies of this mistress of the world. But such sentiments, though in themselves neither useless nor avoidable, it is in vain entirely to indulge. The Grecian as well as the Roman Empire, and Constantinople, the last image of both, must for ever remain amongst the innumerable instances presented by history to prove that it is in vain for a state to expect prosperity in the absence of private and public virtue; and that every nation, where the honorable qualities of the human character are not cultivated and respected, however fortified by ancient renown, prescriptive veneration, or established power, sooner or later must be levelled with the earth and trampled under the feet of the despoiler.

The fall of Constantinople became, when too late, a subject of the most universal terror and affliction to the rest of Europe. Yet such is the intermingled nature of all good and evil, that some benefit resulted to the world from the calamities of the Empire. Constantinople had always been the great repository of the precious remains of ancient genius. The Greeks had continued to pride themselves on their national superiority over the Barbarians of the West, and they celebrated, as exclusively their own, the great original masters of speculative wisdom and practical eloquence, the dramatists who could awaken all the passions of the heart, and the poets who could fire all the energies of the soul, — Plato and Demosthenes, Sophocles and Euripides, Pindar and Homer. But though they admired, they could not emulate, the models which they possessed. Century after century rolled away, and these inestimable treasures, however valued by those who inherited them, were lost to mankind.

Yet, as the fortunes of the Greek Empire declined, the intercourse between Constantinople and the rest of Europe long contributed to the improvement of the latter; and the splendor of the Greek learning and philosophy, even as early as the thirteenth century, had touched with a morning ray the summits of the great kingdoms of the West. In the public schools and universities of Italy and Spain, France and England, distinguished individuals, like our own Bacon of Oxford, applied themselves with success to the study of science, and even of the Grecian literature. In the fourteenth century, the generous emulation of Petrarch and his friends gave a distinct promise of the subsequent revival of learning. While the Turks were encircling with their toils and closing round their destined prey, the scholars of the East were continually escaping from the terror of

their arms or their oppression, and, after the destruction of the metropolis of the East, it was in the West alone they could find either freedom or affluence, either dignity or leisure.

In the sack of Constantinople, amid the destruction of the libraries, one hundred and twenty thousand manuscripts are said to have disappeared; but the scholars, and such of the manuscripts as escaped, were transferred to a new sphere of existence,—to nations that were excited by a spirit of independence and emulation, and to states and kingdoms that were not retrograde and degenerating, as was the Empire of the Greeks. The result was favorable to the world. Like the idol of a pagan temple, the city of the East, though honored and revered by succeeding generations, was still but an object of worship without life or use; when overthrown, however, and broken into fragments by a barbarian assailant, its riches were disclosed, and restored at once to activity and value.

This great event, the revival of learning, is a subject that, from its importance and extent, may occupy indefinitely the liberal inquiry of the student. There has been an introduction to the subject, or a history of the more early appearance of the revival of learning, published in 1798, at Cadell's, which seems written by some author of adequate information, and which is deserving of perusal. I shall, however, more particularly refer you to the notices of Robertson, in his introduction to Charles the Fifth; to those of Mosheim, in his *State of Learning in the Thirteenth and Fourteenth Centuries*; above all, to the latter part of the fifty-third and of the sixty-sixth chapters of Gibbon; and to the *Lives of Lorenzo de' Medici and Leo the Tenth*, by Mr. Roscoe. The observations and inquiries of writers like these will leave little to be sought after by those who consider this great event only in connection with other events, and attribute to it no more than its relative and philosophic importance. Those who wish to do more will, in the references of these eminent historians, find original authors and guides very amply sufficient to occupy and amuse the whole leisure even of a literary life.

The leading observations on this subject will not escape your reflections: that Constantinople was attacked by the Arabs in the seventh and eighth centuries, and might have been swept away from the earth by any of the various Barbarians that infested it at an earlier time, when her scholars and her manuscripts could have had no effect on the rest of mankind, and when the seeds of future improvement would have fallen on a rocky soil, where no flower would have taken root and no vegetation quickened. It is not easy to determine how long the darkness of Europe might in this case have continued, and how little we might have known of the sages, the poets, and the orators of antiquity. Even the Latins themselves, after besieging and capturing Constantinople at the beginning of the thirteenth century, were in possession of the city, and of all that it



could boast and display, for sixty years, and in vain. Their rude and martial spirits were insensible to any wealth which glittered not in their garments or on their board; and warriors like these could little comprehend the value of those intellectual treasures that can give tranquillity to the heart and enjoyment to the understanding. But at a still later period, when the same city was once more and finally subdued by the Turks, the same western nations had been *prepared* for the due reception of what had to no purpose been placed within the reach of their more uncivilized forefathers; and then followed what has been justly denominated the revival of learning. We may congratulate ourselves that the fall of the Empire was postponed so long, and observe on this, as on other occasions, how different is the effect of the same causes and events at different periods of society.

Again, we may observe with admiration and with gratitude the curiosity and zeal of the human mind at this interesting era. The munificence of the patron and the labor of the scholar, the wealth of the great and the industry of the wise, could not then have been more usefully directed; and if the readers of manuscripts are now more rare, if the rivals of the great scholars of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries now seldom appear, and if our late Greek professor, the celebrated Porson, for instance, could no longer see the princes and potentates of the earth contending for the encouragement of his genius, it must be remembered, that, though men like these can never be without their use or their admiration, much of the service which they offer to society has been already rendered, — that their office has been already, to a considerable degree, performed, — that we have been for some time put in possession of the great classical authors, of the models of taste and the materials of thought, — and that we must now labor to emulate what sufficiently for our improvement we already understand. We must reflect, that, were mankind not to exercise their unceremonious and often somewhat unfeeling criticism upon merit of every description, and applaud it precisely to the extent in which it contributes to their benefit, Society would soon be retrograde, or at best but stationary, and each succeeding age would no longer be marked by its own appropriate enlargement of the boundaries of human knowledge.

A concluding observation seems to be, that an obvious alteration has been made in the situation of men of genius. They need no longer hang upon the smiles of a patron; they need no longer debase the Muses or themselves; the progress of human prosperity has given them a public who can appreciate and reward their labors; and even from that public, if too slow in intellect or too poor in virtue, an appeal has been opened to posterity by the invention of printing; and a Locke may see his volumes stigmatized and burnt, or a Newton the slow progress of his reasonings, with that tranquillity which is the privilege of genuine merit, and with that confident anticipation

of the future which may now be the enjoyment of all those who are conscious that they have labored well and that they deserve to be esteemed the benefactors of mankind.

But you will not long be engaged in the histories I have mentioned, before you will perceive, that, at the opening of the sixteenth century, a new and indeed fearful experiment was to be made upon mankind; a spirit not only of literary inquiry, but of *religious* inquiry, was to go forth; the minds of men were everywhere to be agitated on concerns the most dear to them; and the Church of Rome was to be attacked, not only in its discipline, but in its doctrine, not only in its practice, but in its faith.

Opposition to the Papacy in these points, or what was then called heresy, had, indeed, always existed. The student will be called upon, as he reads the preceding history, to notice and respect the more obvious representatives of this virtuous struggle of the human mind — the Albigenses, our own Wickliffe and the Lollards, as well as the Hussites in Bohemia. But, as it was in vain that the works of literature were placed within the reach of the Franks, who first captured Constantinople, so the doctrines of truth and the rights of religious inquiry were to little purpose presented to the consideration of the nations of Europe by the more early Reformers; “the light shone in the darkness, but the darkness comprehended it not.” At the opening, however, of the sixteenth century, the condition of Europe was in some respects essentially improved; and it now seemed possible that they who asserted the cause of the human mind in its dearest interests might at least obtain attention, and probably see their laudable exertions crowned with success.

But whatever might be the virtues or the success of distinguished individuals in establishing their opinions, it was but too certain that a reformation in the doctrines of religion could not be accomplished without the most serious evils; these might be, indeed, entirely overbalanced by the good that was to result, but the most afflicting consequences must necessarily in the first place ensue.

In discussing this great subject of the Reformation, — too vast to be properly treated but in a distinct work for the purpose, — I shall first endeavour briefly to show why these serious evils were to be expected, and then what was the benefit which it was probable might also accrue. In the next place, I shall endeavour to point out such particular transactions in the history of the Reformation as illustrate the representations which I shall thus make. That is, if I may venture, for the purposes of explanation, to adopt language so assuming, I shall, in the remainder of this lecture, propose to your consideration the theory of the events of the Reformation; and in the next, I shall endeavour to show how this theory and the facts correspond. Lastly, I shall mention such books and treatises as may be sufficient to furnish you with proper information on every part of this momentous subject.



Now the great reason why the most serious and extensive evils were to be expected from the breaking out of the Reformation was, first, the natural intolerance of the human mind. But this is so important a principle in every part of the history of the Reformation, and the whole is so unintelligible, unless this principle be first thoroughly understood, that I must consider it more at length than I could wish, or than might at first sight appear necessary. It is necessary, however; for no human mind, in its sound state of reasonableness and humanity, can possibly conceive the scenes that took place in the times of the Reformation, and even in those that preceded and followed them; and it is quite a problem in the science of human nature to account for the astonishing barbarity and even stupidity of which men on these occasions proved themselves to be capable.

A celebrated author, Adam Smith, in the most delightful of all philosophical books, has referred the origin of all our moral sentiments to sympathy. Without presuming to decide how far such a solution is complete, it will be readily allowed that he has fully shown how powerful is the principle itself, how early and how universal. It would be strange, if it affected not, as it certainly does, the opinions we form and the sentiments we utter.

Suppose a person to have taken the same view of a subject with ourselves, how pleased are we to observe this concurrence with our own decisions! Does he speak? how agreeable is his manner! Does he reason? how solid are his arguments! We admire the reasoning, we love the reasoner; his thoughts are like our thoughts, his feelings like our feelings; throughout there is a pleasure, for throughout there is a sympathy. Such a man has a claim on our attention, our kindness, our friendship; we applaud and honor him; we wish every one to listen to him, and imbibe, like ourselves, sentiments which we are now more than ever convinced should be entertained by all men.

But reverse the supposition, and how different is the picture! How unmeaning are the observations, how poor the arguments, of him who is an advocate for a cause which we disapprove! We listen, and we can hear only inadmissible statements, intolerable assertions, throughout, — nothing but mistake, declamation, and delusion. The reasoner, it seems, finds no longer an echo in our bosoms, and, giving us no pleasure, we declare it to be a loss of time to listen to him. We question his information, his ability; proceed, perhaps, to suspect his motives; suspect, indeed, any thing, but an error in our own judgment. It is indeed a pity, we cry, that such fallacies should be heard; they may, after all, if repeated, gain ground; men should not be suffered to propagate such false opinions. Surely, we conclude, the cause of propriety and truth is of some consequence to the world, and ought by all wise and good men to be vindicated.

From beginnings like these, to what extent may not the mind be

carried by contest and collision ! When men speak or write, and at every word there is a discord, and pain at every moment given or received, how soon is dispute converted into dislike, hardened into hatred, exasperated into rage ! What folly and what outrage may not be expected to ensue !

But any effect thus described is proportionally accelerated and increased, whenever the object of discussion either really is or can be supposed to be interesting and important. Now it must be observed, that every thing becomes interesting and important that can be brought into any alliance with the religious principle. This religious principle is in itself so natural, so just, and so respectable, that it can transfer its own respectability to every thing which by any workings of the reason or of the imagination it can be made to approach. All the powerful and laudable feelings of our hearts are here instantly engaged. The opinion we adopt, the rite we perform, we conceive to be acceptable to the Almighty, and, being so, it is no longer within the proper province of the discussions of reason ; it is piety to retain, sinfulness to abandon it ; it is our first duty, it is our best happiness, to propagate it, to extend to others that favor of the Deity which it procures for ourselves ; but to hear it questioned, contradicted, or despised is to submit not only to falsehood, but to impiety, to be indifferent to the truth, to be recreant to our most solemn obligations, to refuse to vindicate the cause of heaven and of our God.

Every motive here conspires to exasperate our sympathy and our judgment, our feelings and our reason, to extravagances the most unlimited ; the natural propensities of the human mind to intolerance are here so influenced by an idea in which every other must be absorbed, the idea of the Supreme Being, that all the common and regular movements of the passions are overpowered, all the more ordinary suggestions of the understanding at an end ; and the man with his faculties yet sound and awake, with his heart still beating in his bosom, sees, without shuddering, a being like himself, for some difference in his religious creed, racked on a wheel or agonizing in flames, and yet can suppose that he is thus discharging an act of duty to his Creator and of benevolence to his fellow-creatures, — that he is conforming to the precepts of religion, and approving himself an acceptable servant to the God of mercy !

Is human nature, then, it will be said, so totally without aid and direction ? Is the duty of toleration so unintelligible ? Is the truth on this subject so difficult to be discovered ? — The duty of toleration is very intelligible ; it is founded on the great axiom of all morality, that we are to do to others as we should think it just should be done to ourselves. There is no want of evidence in this truth ; it instantly finds admission to the understanding ; but truths must do much more than find admission to the understanding, or the conduct will not be affected.



The history of mankind has been a continual illustration of the natural intolerance of the human mind. I shall mention a few examples.

The most memorable instance of suffering from intolerance is that of our Saviour himself. It was in vain that Pilate asked the Jews, "Why, what evil hath he done?" The only answer that could be obtained was, "Crucify him! crucify him!" A true picture of the nature of the human mind on these subjects at all times.

"Which of the prophets have not your fathers persecuted?" said the martyr Stephen, in his last moments of peril. To the death of this innocent man was Paul consenting, and he stood unmoved by the spectacle of his faith and sufferings. The same Paul was still exhibiting the natural workings of the human mind, he was still "breathing out threatenings and slaughter" against the disciples, when it pleased the Almighty, by a particular interposition of his power, to check the unrighteous labors of his ardent mind, and to purify for his service a man worthy of a better cause, and destined to be the apostle of benevolence and truth.

The subsequent sufferings of the disciples and the early Christians attested, indeed, the sincerity of their own faith, but show too forcibly the intolerance of the rest of mankind. The very evidence of our religion, in one point of view, is thus measured by the measure of human intolerance, and might serve, if any thing could serve, as an eternal warning to those who presume to offer violence to the religious opinions of their fellow-creatures.

When the younger Pliny was governor of Bithynia, the Christians were brought before him as men who would not conform to the rites and ceremonies of the national worship. Two remarkable letters passed between him and the good Trajan on the subject, — letters well known to those who have considered the evidences of their religion, and which exhibit a very valuable picture of the first suggestions of the human mind in concerns of this particular nature. The result, however, was, that Pliny ordered the Christians to be led out to execution: he had no objection, nor had the Romans, to their worship of Christ; but when the Christians refused to pay homage, in like manner, to the gods of Rome, this sort of perverseness, says Pliny, was evidently a crime, and deserving of condign punishment; that is, when the religious opinions of the Christian appeared to be in direct opposition to his own, these opinions were to be put down by force.

The ancients have been sometimes represented as tolerant, but this is lightly said; they were never put to any trial of the kind; from the nature of their polytheism, they never could be. Had Pliny been questioned at the time by a man more enlightened than himself, he would, no doubt, have made the answer which others, with less excuse than Pliny, have but too frequently offered: that it was one thing to

allow the Christians to sacrifice to Christ, and another thing to allow them to contradict the religion of the state; that he was ready to permit them to worship the Deity according to their own notions, but that it was impossible to suffer them to destroy the faith of others; and that he could see a clear distinction between toleration in religion and indifference to true religion.

The necessity of free inquiry, as a means of attaining to truth, — the equal eye with which the great Creator, it must be presumed, will survey the sincere, though varying, efforts of his creatures in pursuit of it, — the injustice of doing to the Christians what he, as a Christian, would think unreasonable and cruel, — topics of this obvious nature would have been offered to the consideration of Pliny, probably, with the same ill success which has accompanied them on every occasion, when the rights of religion and humanity have been pleaded.

Can two contradictory opinions, says the pious man, be equally true? — May they not, it may be answered, may they not be equally accepted by the Almighty Father, if offered to him with equal sincerity and humility of spirit, and after the same petitions for his grace and assistance? But, at all events, it is not for human beings to attempt to propagate truth by force.

From the time of Pliny to the establishment of Christianity under Constantine, from Constantine to the establishment of the Papal power, from that fatal event to the destruction of Constantinople, the Christian world was rent into divisions, each in its turn persecuting the other. The student may see in the pages of Gibbon the disgraceful and often bloody hostilities of contending sects; and he will much more easily comprehend the guilt of the rival disputants than the subjects of their unchristian animosity.

I do not detain you with any allusions to particular passages in Gibbon, in Mosheim, or in any other ecclesiastic historian. You will read them yourselves; and this is one of the many occasions that will occur in the delivery of these lectures, where I am obliged to despatch in a single sentence a mass of reading that may afterwards very properly occupy you for many days and weeks. It is sufficient for me, at present, that I may safely assume the general fact, that the specimens of the natural intolerance of the human mind to be found in such writers are perfectly innumerable.

We have hitherto spoken, first, of the intolerance of the Jews to the early Christians; afterwards, of the pagans to the followers of Christ; lastly, of the Christians to each other. But as we descend through the history of Europe, we shall next have to observe how lamentable and totally unrelenting have been the persecutions which the Christians have in their turn exercised upon the Jews. To speak literally and without a figure, this unhappy race seems not to have been considered by our ancestors as within the pale of hu-



manity; and our great poet, who drew mankind just as he found them, puts into the mouth of Shylock a train of reasoning that proceeds upon this dreadful supposition: — “Hath not a Jew eyes? hath not a Jew hands?” &c., &c. “Fed with the same food, warmed and cooled by the same winter and summer, as a Christian is?”

As we descend to times a little later, we at length perceive even a regular tribunal created for the avowed purposes of persecution,—the tribunal of the Inquisition. And who, let us ask, was among its earliest approvers? Louis the Ninth of France, the most generous and just of men.

And here I pause; it cannot be necessary that I should proceed any farther. Calling, therefore, to mind what we have passed through in this brief review, and what we before endeavored to show, I may now finally observe, that such appear to me, in the first place, the explanation and the theory of the natural intolerance of every human mind on every subject, and more particularly on religious subjects; and such, in the second place, the leading facts of history to exemplify this last intolerance on religious subjects, prior to the time of the Reformation. At that epoch, therefore, mankind had very fully exhibited their real nature; and it was very evident, if differences in religious opinions were to arise, how afflicting would be the consequences.

But it must have been clear, in the next place, that such differences *must* arise; for the spirit of religious inquiry was to be called into action; and upon what was it to be exercised? Upon the Scriptures themselves, and upon the works of the Fathers,—writings composed in what to the inquirers were dead languages.

Now, whenever the human mind exercises its powers with freedom, different men will take different views of the same subject; they will draw different conclusions, even where the materials presented to their judgment are the same. Not only this, but in points of religious doctrine, from the very awfulness of the subject, the mind scarcely presumes to exercise its faculties; and in *these* disquisitions men have no longer the chance, whatever it may be, which they have on *other* subjects, of arguing themselves into agreement.

Again, the evidence which the Reformers had to produce to each other for their respective opinions was their respective interpretation of one or many different texts of Scripture, of one or many different passages in the writings of the Fathers. Now, of all such evidence it must be observed, that it never, from the very nature of it, could be demonstrative. In mathematical questions, where the relations of quantity are alone concerned, a dispute can be completely terminated; because from wrong premises or false reasoning a contradiction can be at last shown to result; some impossibility appears,—the greater is equal to the less, or the less to the greater. The same may be said of many parts of the sciences; because a question

can here always be asked which admits of a precise answer, and is, at the same time, decisive of the contest, — What is the fact? — what says the experiment?

But when a question is to depend on the interpretation of texts and passages in Scripture, the case is totally altered; for, of the different meanings that can be affixed, no one can be shown to be, strictly speaking, impossible. They may be shown to be more or less reasonable, but no more: the scale of evidence here is reasonableness; metaphysically speaking, is probability. Men cannot be proved in these, as in mathematical disquisitions, to be totally right or totally wrong; they cannot be left at once without an argument or without an opponent. A reasoner on such subjects may, from inferiority of judgment, or what is called perversity of judgment, or any other cause, adopt that meaning which is the less sound and just of any two that may be proposed to him; but if he does, he can never, by any consequent impossibility, be absolutely compelled to admit the more reasonable opinion of his opponent.

It is very true that this probable evidence is sufficient for men to reason and act upon; but it is not sufficient to preclude the possibility of dispute; and this is all that is here contended for. When the nature of the evidence is this of probability, the varying powers of judgment and the ready passions of mankind have full liberty to interfere; men may be more or less reasonable, as these causes direct. No such interference is possible in discussions that concern matters of experiment and fact, and the relations of quantity. We have, therefore, no sects or parties in mathematics, but they abound in every other department of human opinion.

We have now, therefore, to present to the consideration of the student two observations; they are these: not only, in the first place, that the human mind was naturally intolerant; but that, in the second place, the evidence that could be laid before it never, from the nature of it, could be demonstrative; and that, therefore, this intolerance had full opportunity to act.

But there is yet another observation to be made. It was not only that disputes could not be necessarily terminated, even when exercised upon the great and proper topics of debate, but it was clear, both from the nature of the human mind and from the testimony of history, that men, when awakened to the consideration of religious subjects, would assuredly engage in the most subtle metaphysical inquiries, and, by their vain efforts to know and to teach more than the Scriptures had taught them, or than, it may be presumed, the Almighty Creator intended their faculties to comprehend, would involve themselves and their followers in disputes which it would be more than ever impossible to set at rest by reasoning, and which, on that very account, would be only the more calculated to exasperate their passions.



In addition to these considerations, there is another: we must reflect on the situation of the world at this particular epoch. Europe had, no doubt, improved during several of the preceding centuries, and was even rapidly improving at the time. But it must still be noted, that literature had made as yet little progress, science still less; men had not been softened by the fine arts, and the peaceful pleasures which they afford; they had not been humanized by much intercourse with each other; martial prowess was their virtue; superstitious observances their religion. In this situation, they were on a sudden to have their passions roused and their intellectual talents exercised upon subjects which require to their adjustment all the virtues and all the improvement of which the human character is capable. On these accounts the prospect for mankind on the opening of the Reformation was very awful; it was evident much misery must result from the natural intolerance of the mind, from the materials with which that intolerance was now to be supplied, and from the general ignorance and rudeness of society.

But there was yet another consideration to be taken into account. We have hitherto endeavoured to estimate the evils to which the breaking out of the Reformation would give occasion, by stating its more natural and appropriate effects upon the human mind; but the religious principle which was thus to be awakened was sure to intermingle itself in all *earthly* concerns; it was sure to give names to parties, to multiply afresh the causes of irritation and offence, and to add new restlessness and motion to the politics of the world.

Again, there was even an inherent and inevitable difficulty in the subject, by whatever unexpected influence of moderation and reason mankind had chosen to be controlled. The Roman hierarchy were the spiritual instructors of the people, and as such had ecclesiastical revenues. But it was evident, that, if there arose a set of men who disputed the doctrines of that hierarchy, these last would no longer think it reasonable that such revenues should be so applied; they would represent them as devoted only to the unrighteous purposes of superstition and error; they would insist upon at least a share, if not the whole, for the support of themselves, while engaged in the propagation of truth and genuine Christianity. The established teachers would, therefore, be disturbed in their possessions, deprived of their benefices, some perhaps thrown naked and defenceless into the world at advanced periods of age and infirmity. Such mutations of property, it was but too clear, could neither be attempted nor executed without violence; and violence, so exercised, could not but be attended by the most furious animosities, disturbance, and calamity.

Again, when these revenues had been converted to the support of the first reformed preachers, these were likely to be in their turn opposed by new and succeeding descriptions of religious inquirers; the same reasoning would, therefore, again be urged, the same strug

gle be repeated, the same force be employed. On the whole, therefore, statesmen and princes and warriors were sure, from the first, to be engaged in all these disputes, and to kindle in the general flame; and the controversies of religion were sure to be decided, like the ordinary contests of mankind, by the sword, — by the sword, indeed, but amid a conflict of passions rendered more than ever blind and sanguinary from the materials which were now added of more than human obstinacy, intrepidity, and rancor.

Such were the evils that were to be expected at the breaking out of the Reformation, from the intolerance of men, from the nature of the evidence that could be produced to them in their new subjects of dispute, from the particular metaphysical turn which these disputes would probably take, from the unimproved state of society in Europe, from the intermixture of the earthly politics of the world with religious concerns, and from the inevitable and difficult question of the disposal of the ecclesiastical revenues.

But what was, then, the benefit that mankind were likely to receive which might compensate for the evils to which they were to be thus exposed? The benefit that it was probable would result was above all price; it was this: that they who disputed the doctrines of the Romish Church, however they might for a time appeal to the Pope or general councils, must at length appeal to the Bible itself; that the sacred text would be, therefore, examined, criticized, and understood; that, however violent or unjust the force which the hierarchy or the civil magistrate might attempt to exercise, still, as the human mind was capable of the steadiest resistance, when animated by the cause of truth, — as men were equal to the contempt of imprisonment, tortures, or death, for the sake of their religious opinions, — as history had borne sufficient testimony to the exalted constancy of our nature in these respects, — that, *therefore*, the Reformers must in all probability *succeed* in establishing a purer faith, and must at all events contribute to improve both the doctrines and the conduct of their opponents; that, from the general fermentation which would ensue, it could not *but* happen that *the Bible would be opened*, — that doctrines would no longer be taken upon authority, — that religion would no longer consist so much in vain ceremonies and passive ignorance, — that devotion would become a reasonable sacrifice, — and that the Gospel would, in fact, be a second time promulgated to an erring and sinful world.

Now what further benefit might attend this emancipation of the human mind from its spiritual thralldom it might have been difficult at the time properly to estimate. But this new gift of Christianity to mankind was a blessing in itself sufficient to outweigh all temporal calamities, of whatever extent. To be the humble instruments, under Divine Providence, of imparting such a benefit to the world was the virtuous ambition, the pious hope, of the early Reformers. It was



this that gave such activity to their exertions, such inflexibility to their fortitude. This sacred ardor, this holy energy, in the cause of religious truth, is the remaining principle which, in conjunction with those I have mentioned, will be found to have actuated mankind during the ages we are now to consider. As the principles before mentioned gave occasion to all that was dark and afflicting in the scene, so did the principle *now* mentioned give occasion to all that was bright and cheering and elevating to the soul; united, they may serve, when followed up through their remote as well as immediate effects, to explain, as I conceive, the events of the Reformation, and for some ages all the more important part of the history of Europe.

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## LECTURE X.

### THE REFORMATION.

I ENDEAVOURED in my last lecture to describe the evils to which mankind would probably be exposed by any attempts to produce the reformation of religion, and the benefits by which such evils were likely to be overbalanced. I must now consider how far, in point of fact, such evils and such benefits were really experienced.

And here it is necessary for me to remind you of one of the difficulties which I announced to you in my introductory lecture, as more particularly belonging to all lectures on history, — the impossibility that a lecturer must find of presenting to his hearer all that has passed in review before his own mind, and the blank that must therefore be left, till the subsequent diligence of the student has furnished him with the same materials of judgment which the lecturer had before him. Thus, in the present instance, the opinions which were presented to your reflection in the lecture of yesterday were suggested by a vast assemblage of facts, an assemblage which in reality constitutes the history of the Reformation. How, then, are these to be presented to you? The history cannot be given here, nor any part of it; a few allusions and references are all the expedients I can have recourse to. These will at present convey to your minds little that can operate upon them in the way of evidence, but you must consider them as specimens of evidence; you must recollect that nothing more can be now attempted, and you must be contented with expecting to find, as you certainly will find hereafter, when you come to read the history for yourselves, that the general import of the facts

has not been misrepresented, and that the theories I have proposed might have been very amply illustrated, if the proper incidents and transactions could have been conveniently exhibited to your consideration.

Thus, first, with respect to the effects which I conceived could not but result from the natural intolerance of the human mind. Of this the proof will hereafter appear to you but too complete. It will be even visible to a considerable degree in the lectures which I shall have next to deliver, on the religious wars, — the wars that accompanied and followed the progress of the Reformation. But in the mean time, I can only refer you to the testimony of the historians who remark upon this particular point, while writing under the immediate impression of all the transactions which they have had occasion to relate. I shall produce, as one of the most unobjectionable that can be mentioned, the judgment that has been delivered by Robertson.

“The Roman Catholics,” says Robertson, “as their system rested on the decisions of an infallible judge, never doubted that truth was on their side, and openly called on the civil power to repel the impious and heretical innovators who had risen up against it. The Protestants, no less confident that their doctrine was well founded, required, with equal ardor, the princes of their party to check such as presumed to impugn or to oppose it. Luther, Calvin, Cranmer, Knox, the founders of the Reformed Church in their respective countries, inflicted, as far as they had power and opportunity, the same punishments which were denounced against their own disciples by the Church of Rome, upon such as called in question any article in their creeds. To their followers, and perhaps to their opponents, it would have appeared a symptom of diffidence in the goodness of their cause, or an acknowledgment that it was not well founded, if they had not employed in its defence all those means which it was supposed truth had a right to employ.”

This passage from Robertson I conceive to be in the main just, though I think Luther might have been favorably distinguished from Calvin and others. There are passages in his writings, with regard to the interference of the magistrate in religious concerns, that do him honor; but he was favorably situated, and lived not to see the temporal sword at his command. He was never tried.

The language of other historians is similar to that of Robertson, but in general more strong. I need not detain my hearers with detailing to them those passages in their account which must necessarily be met with in the course of any regular perusal of their narratives. I shall, however, enumerate a few instances taken from different periods and different countries.

One of the most early and noted of the Reformers was Huss. He was burnt to death by the Nominalists at the council of Constance.



But it must be observed, that, when he had been himself "dressed in a little brief authority," he had persecuted the Nominalists to the utmost of his power, because he was himself a Realist. These terms are known to those who have engaged in metaphysical inquiries, and to those only; and if explained, would show, what need not be shown, that intolerance is never at a loss for materials.

By the execution of Huss and Jerome of Prague, the heroic Ziska had been driven into such paroxysms of indignation and gloom, that he was at last observed by Wenceslaus, and encouraged to excite his countrymen to resist and punish these unprincipled persecutors and destroyers of their fellow-creatures. But a few years afterwards we find from Mosheim that he himself fell upon the Beghards, a miserable set of fanatics, putting some to the sword, and condemning the rest to the flames, because he gave full credit, probably without any proper examination, to the charges that had been brought against them of some immoral practices. Yet must Ziska be considered as a hero, in the best sense of the word, and memorable in history for virtue as well as talents and intrepidity.

Calvin, too, must be thought a man of religion and goodness, according to his own melancholy notions of religion and goodness. Yet could this celebrated Reformer, as is well known, cause Servetus to be condemned to death for heresy; and because the unhappy man had reiterated his shrieks, when condemned, at the very idea of the fire in which he was to perish, Calvin could find, when writing in the retirement of his closet, a subject not only for his comment, but his censure, and even his ridicule (at least, his contempt), in these afflicting agonies of affrighted nature.

Francis the First, who united all the softer virtues, at least, to all the honorable and gallant feelings of a gentleman and a soldier, could, however, declare, in a public assembly (I quote the words of the historian), "that, if one of his hands were infected with heresy, he would cut it off with the other, and would not spare even his own children, if found guilty of that crime"; and immediately after, six of his subjects who had libelled the Roman Church were publicly burnt, "with circumstances," says the historian, "of the most shocking barbarity attending their execution." Francis, it will be said, was no religionist; yet he lived upon the applause of men generous and intrepid like himself; he prided himself upon his sincerity, and what he said must have been the genuine effusion of his own mind, and equally the echo of the general sentiment.

Men like these may be thought warm and impetuous in their nature; but what are we to say of our own Sir Thomas More? What man so amiable in his manners, so invincible in his integrity, so gentle, so accomplished? Yet does this man take his place among the persecutors who disgrace the pages of history. In Fox's Book of Martyrs he leads up the ranks where Bonner and other

dreadful men are afterwards so distinguished. "As soon as More came into favor," says Burnet, in his *History of the Reformation*, "he pressed the king much to put the laws against heretics in execution, and suggested that the court of Rome would be more wrought upon by the king's supporting the Church and defending the faith vigorously than by threatenings."

The most eminent person who suffered about this time was Thomas Bilney. "More," says Burnet, "not being satisfied to have sent the writ for his burning, studied also to defame him." In December, one John Tewksbury was taken and tried in Sir Thomas More's house, where sentence was given against him by Stokesley, the Chancellor's assistant in this work of blood, and he was burnt in Smithfield. "James Bainham, a gentleman of the Temple, was carried," says Burnet (I quote his words), "to the Lord Chancellor's house, where much pains was taken to persuade him to discover such as he knew in the Temple who favored the new opinions; but, fair means not prevailing, More made him be whipped in his own presence, and after that sent him to the Tower, where he looked on and saw him put to the rack." At last he was burnt in Smithfield. "There were also some others burnt," says Burnet, "a little before this time, of whom a particular account could not be recovered by Fox, with all his industry. But with Bainham, More's persecution ended; for soon after, he laid down the great seal, which set the poor preachers at ease." Such are the words of Burnet.

The lectures that you are now listening to, on the Reformation, were drawn up by me more than twenty years ago. Lately there has been published a *Life of Sir Thomas More* by Sir James Mackintosh. It is very consoling to think that Sir James has been able to rescue the fame of More from any charge of positive cruelty, and even from materially forgetting the sentiments of mercy and justice which nature and reflection had implanted in his bosom. More says positively, in his *Apology*, "Of all that ever came in my hand for heresy, as help me God,\* had never any of them any stripe or stroke given them, so much as a fillip on the forehead"; and again, that he never did examine any with torments. The date of the work in which More denies the charge was 1533, "after that he had given over the office of Lord Chancellor," and was in daily expectation of being committed to the Tower. The book is entitled, "*The Apology of Sir Thomas More*." Defenceless and obnoxious as he was, no one disputed its truth. Fox was the first who, thirty years afterwards,

\* Professor Smyth quotes, not directly from More himself, but from his biographer, Sir James Mackintosh, who here omits a qualifying clause, which may be regarded, perhaps, as of some importance. The entire passage in the original is as follows:—"And of al that euer came in my hand for heresye, as helpe me God, *sauing as I said the sure keeping of them*, and yet not so sure neither, but that George Costatine could stele awaye: els had neuer any of the any stripe or stroke giue the, so muche as a fylpype on the forehead." *Workes of Sir Thomas More* (folio, London, 1557), pp. 901, 902.—N.



ventured to oppose it in statements which we know to be in some respects inaccurate. His charges are copied by Burnet, and, with considerable hesitation, by Strype. Burnet never could have seen Sir Thomas More's Apology. As More died to maintain his veracity, his assertion must be believed.

Of all the Reformers, the most exemplary for the mildness of his temperament was Melancthon; yet Melancthon could approve and justify the conduct of Calvin in his atrocious punishment of Servetus.

What man, all his difficulties considered, more estimable — at least, what man less fitted by nature for intolerance — than Cranmer? Yet, when Joan of Kent had pronounced some opinion which was judged heretical, concerning the mystery of the Incarnation, she was, by the sentence of a commission where Cranmer presided, adjudged a heretic, and “delivered over,” as it was called, “to the secular power,” — that is, sent to be murdered at the stake by fire.

The youth of the king, Edward the Sixth, had not as yet admitted of a sufficient progress in the doctrines of intolerance. He could not be prevailed on to sign the warrant. “He thought it,” says the historian, “a piece of cruelty too like that which they had condemned in Papists, to burn any for their consciences.” Cranmer was employed to reason away, if possible, the sentiments of mercy and justice. He argued and refined, and produced his authorities; but his reasons, says Burnet, “did rather silence than satisfy the young king, who still thought it a hard thing (as in truth it was) to proceed so severely in such cases; so he set his hand to the warrant with tears in his eyes, saying to Cranmer, that if he did wrong, since it was in submission to his authority, he should answer for it to God.” The archbishop paused; he might well pause. Some effect had been produced by the humane terror and artless sensibility of his youthful sovereign, and the horror of the scene that was to ensue had been presented to the imagination at least, if not to the understanding, of Cranmer. The sentence was delayed, was suspended for a year; but was at last executed.

It is surely remarkable, that, under such favorable circumstances, the principles of toleration seem never to have occurred either to Cranmer or to Ridley. They sent for the unfortunate woman immediately after the conference with the king, not to dismiss her with their advice, but to persuade her to recant, — to save her, if possible, from being the proper object, as they conceived, of their punishment. Their humanity and good sense, for they possessed both, could see no farther into this subject; and as the woman was not less attached to what she thought the truth than they were themselves, it is probable that they conceived there was no alternative but to put her to death.

Two years after, one George Van Pare, being accused for some heretical opinion concerning another of the mysteries, was condemned in the same manner, and burnt in Smithfield.

The Papists observed, says the historian, "that the Reformers were only against burning when they were in fear of it themselves." Cranmer was said by them to have consented to the death both of Lambert and Anne Askew. These instances were appealed to in Queen Mary's time to justify a retaliation of persecution, — to justify a repetition of proceedings that are as degrading for their stupidity as they are horrible for their cruelty. It is even contended, though unnecessarily, that Edward the Sixth was himself thinking only of the eternal happiness of the unhappy woman who was to be burnt, which he thought would be endangered, if she died a heretic; and that he was not thinking of her earthly sufferings. But if so, if even his gentle and youthful nature could be insensible to the claims of humanity in its practical application to this life, how much stronger is the general reasoning now insisted upon!

Now, to forget for a moment all the pages of ecclesiastical history, — to mention neither the persecution of the Christians by the heathens, nor of the Christians by each other, — not to anticipate what remains yet to be told of Philip the Second and Catherine de Médicis, or of minor instances of persecution, such as the deprivation of benefices, and the imprisonment and exile of each sect in its turn, — let the student pause and meditate on the nature of such men as have been mentioned: Pliny, Louis the Ninth, before the Reformation, — Melanethon, and Cranmer, and Ridley, after the Reformation. If there be any characters in history that in every other respect but this of intolerance are the ornaments of their nature, they are these. If these are not favorable specimens of mankind, none can be found: vigorous in their understandings, cultivated in their minds, gentle in their nature, conversant with the world and its business, refined, and pure, and perfect, as far as in this sublunary state perfection can be found. These are certainly most awful lessons.

I cannot enter into any discussion of the different degrees of intolerance which different sects have exhibited. It is possible, it might naturally be expected, that the Protestant would be less deeply criminal than the Roman Catholic, or rather the Papist; but I cannot now stay to appreciate this relative criminality, or point out its causes. I speak of the guilt of all, — of mankind, of human nature, of the inherent intolerance of the human heart, be the bosom in which it beats of whatever character or description, Pagan or Christian, Protestant or Roman Catholic.

Much improvement has, no doubt, taken place in society on this momentous subject, — much since the first breaking out of the Reformation. As in the solitude of the prophet Elijah, the Lord passed by, and a great and strong wind rent the mountains, but he was not in the wind; and after the wind an earthquake, but the Lord was not in the earthquake; and after the earthquake a fire, but the Lord was not in the fire; and after the fire a still small voice, and the Lord



was in that voice: so in the solitude of the human mind, from the moment that the spirit of religious inquiry had reached it, and the Lord had passed by, the visitations of intolerance succeeded, and there has been the dispute of the polemic, and the embattled field of the warrior, and the stake of the persecutor, — the wind, and the earthquake, and the fire, — and the Lord was not in these; and at last the mild and benevolent precepts of the Gospel, the still small voice, has been slowly heard, and it is perceived that the Lord is in that voice. Blessed be the God of mercy, that thus far an advancement in religion, a new reformation, has been at length accomplished! It is no longer supposed that to persecute is to please God; the rights of conscience are acknowledged at least, and there is here some hope and some victory over the powers of darkness.

The misfortune still is, that men honor the doctrines of toleration with their lips, while they seem not aware that their heart is far from them. The principles of intolerance, that is, the principles of their nature, still maintain their hold, though they may be awed, and tamed, and civilized, and reduced to assume forms less frightful and destructive, in these later ages. Uncharitable insinuations, mutual accusations, mutual contempt and ignorance of the arguments and tenets of each other, these, in both the superior and inferior sects, have supplied the place of the virulence and fury of earlier times; and unnecessary exclusions, penal laws, and civil disabilities are now the milder representatives of their horrible predecessors, the dungeon and the stake.

These paragraphs were written twenty years ago, and a most important amelioration of the situation of inferior sects has been since accomplished.

I must now recur to the second observation which I proposed to your consideration. It was this: not only that disputes would necessarily arise from the particular constitution of the human mind, but that, from the very nature of the evidence on which points of doctrine must necessarily rest, they never could be expected to appear exactly terminated; that this evidence could never, as in mathematical subjects, be demonstrative; that it might be fitted to convince a candid inquirer after truth, but could never bear down the mind and insuperably extort conviction. The history of the Reformation, like all prior ecclesiastical history, confirms this remark.

No efforts of princes or divines could ever produce a uniformity of religion. The contrariety of opinion even between Luther and Zuinglius, the great Swiss Reformer, was found irremediable. In vain were these venerable men (surely no ordinary inquirers after truth) brought together to accommodate their differences, and accompanied by the most eminent of their followers. After a conference of four days, "their dissension," says Mosheim, "concerning the manner of Christ's presence in the Eucharist still remained, nor could either of

the contending parties be persuaded to abandon or even to modify their opinion of that matter." (Mosh., Vol. IV. p. 76.) — The real fact was, that Luther even hazarded, as far as human conduct could hazard, the success of the Reformation itself, because he could not be brought to comprehend within the general confederacy the followers of Zuinglius and Bucer. — Vol. IV. p. 98.

Again, at the diet of Augsburg, the Reformers exhibited the articles of their faith, to which the Romanists replied. "Various conferences," says Mosheim, "were held between persons of eminence, piety, and learning; nothing was omitted that might have the least tendency to calm the animosity, heal the divisions, and unite the hearts of the contending parties; but all to no purpose, since the difference," says the historian, "between their opinions was too considerable and of too much importance to admit of a reconciliation." (Vol. IV. p. 96.) — It is possible that the difference might be considerable and important, as the historian here describes; but the result would have been the same, had it been otherwise.

Again, the Emperor Charles the Fifth published a system, called the Interim, which he fondly imagined, as being a medium between the two parties, might be acceded to by both. The Pope was surprised that a man who knew the world like Charles should indulge for a moment so vain a delusion; and observed, that it was unnecessary to disturb himself about the success of a project which, not belonging to any party, would be neglected by all, and soon forgotten: and such, indeed, was the event.

Again, at a conference at Worms, between persons of learning and piety, Eckius and the excellent Melancthon disputed during the space of three days; But this conference, says Mosheim, produced no other effect than a reference to a general council. — Vol. IV. p. 107.

The student, as he peruses the volumes of Mosheim on the progress of the Reformation through different countries, will see instances like these only multiplied as he proceeds; and it will be natural for him to conclude that a fate not very dissimilar will attend the efforts of learned men, whenever they are employed, not in contending, as were the *first* Reformers, for the opening of the Bible and the freedom of religious opinion, but for the particular doctrines by which their sects and churches are distinguished. An unprejudiced inquirer may be convinced by their reasonings, but their reasonings will be lost upon each other. The celebrated History of the Council of Trent, by Father Paul, may be referred to; the book is now valuable chiefly on this very account. Let the student open it wherever he chooses; let him consider the nature of such subjects, and the nature of the human mind, — the abstruseness of the one, and the manner in which the operations of the other are always prompted, or at least modified, by the influence of the feelings; and he will then



no longer, like the vulgar, stand amazed to see that the learned and the wise can dispute so much and decide so little.

My third observation was, that it might be expected that the disputes of mankind would immediately involve them in the most inextricable labyrinths of metaphysical subtilty, and that most serious evils must inevitably be the consequence.

Before the time of the Reformation, the religious animosities of mankind had always turned on speculative points of doctrine; they did so afterwards. The first Reformers had scarcely attacked with success such doctrines and corruptions of the Church of Rome as were more or less destructive of morality and real religion, but they plunged into discussions of the most mysterious and impenetrable nature. This will be but too obvious to those who read even the history of the Reformation; it will be only the more obvious to those who make themselves acquainted with the theological writings of the Reformers.

The celebrated book written by Father Paul, the History of the Council of Trent, may be again referred to; it may serve as a general specimen of this part of the subject. It may not be possible to read the whole of it, but of the eight books which constitute the work, the second more particularly, and the latter part of the eighth, should at least be read. Observation should be made on the nature of those Protestant tenets which were drawn out for examination, or rather for condemnation, by the Roman Catholic Fathers. Their abstruse nature will be very apparent, and the reader cannot but be reminded of the controversial discussions that he has before seen in ecclesiastical history. The tendency, therefore, of theological inquiries and disquisitions to run into the speculations of metaphysical divinity is thus visible, both before and after the Reformation, and may now be considered as quite a characteristic of the human mind.

I observed, too, that disputes of this nature were not the more likely, on account of their real difficulty, to be treated with calmness and pronounced upon with hesitation, but that the contrary would be the event; and that these very points of difficulty were those for which men would contend with the greater fury, and on which they would decide with the more ready dogmatism.

Now, on looking at the history of the Reformation, abundant evidence will be found to substantiate this assertion. By whatever mysterious abstractions, by whatever controversial subtilties, by whatever unaccountable observances and ceremonies the faith of any sect was distinguished, followers were never wanting to glory in those particular characteristics of discipline or doctrine, — for the sake of them to submit to any privations, to march to battle, to languish in imprisonment, or to expire in the flames.

The great orator of Rome was compelled to sigh over the inanity of all human contentions. Something of a similar sentiment may, perhaps, pass across the mind, when we survey the volumes of the

Council of Trent, the monument of the unavailing warfare of the learning and ability of the times; but we may sigh more deeply, when we consider, that, among the thousands and the ten thousands that suffered persecution and death, most of them were guilty only of some supposed error in speculative doctrine, of taking the literal or figurative sense of some passages in Scripture, of interpreting a text in a manner different from its accepted sense, or of drawing from a comparison of several texts a different conclusion from that which they were understood to warrant. The real presence in the Eucharist, for instance, was the great point on which the lives of men depended. The student should by all means turn to Fox's Book of Martyrs; let him look at the doctrines, for the affirmation or denial of which, men, and even women, were thrown into the flames; particularly, let him look at the disputation held before Henry the Eighth; and again by Cranmer, Latimer, and Ridley, at Oxford: he will see, and, if he is inexperienced in such subjects, he will see with astonishment, the preposterous manner in which logic and metaphysics were made the ceremonies that preceded the execution and agonies of these eminent martyrs. Let him consider, again, what were the reasons for which Cranmer himself had before tied his victims to the stake. I do not detail the points upon which the prelate disputed, or the *reasons* for which he put an unhappy woman and an inoffensive foreigner to death. They are to be found, the first in Fox, the second in Burnet. I cannot detail to you particulars of this nature.

Indeed, one of the difficulties I encounter at this moment, and in many other parts of this lecture, is the impropriety of quoting, in any manner, however concise, any portion of the records or books to which I allude. The reason is this:—In the course of such transactions as I have to mention, the most mysterious terms of our religion were brought forward, examined, analyzed, and made the subjects of the most subtle and perplexing disquisitions and disputes. This was, indeed, the very manner in which the piety of our ancestors unfortunately displayed itself during these singular ages. A due sense of religion with *us* takes a different, and surely a more reasonable direction; and the awful *reserve* which it prescribes, in every public allusion to such sacred subjects, and to the mysteries of our faith,—the Incarnation, for instance,—it can be no wish of mine, even for a moment, or however innocently, to violate or offend.

But to return. Men, it will be said, are not now tormented, or deprived of life, for metaphysical distinctions in divinity. It may be so: we shall, however, do well to note, as I have before observed, what the nature of the human mind really is. Thus much may be certainly affirmed,—that there never was, and there never will be, a time when the multitude will not suppose that all these questions are perfectly intelligible. The real and matured scholar, indeed,



may hesitate, while he assents to particular points, but the multitude have no difficulties: the mazes which look intricate and dark to the man of sense and learning are to them without a thorn, and even arrayed in all the sunshine of heaven.

Such was, indeed, the spectacle sometimes displayed during the progress of, and long after and before, the Reformation. Erasmus might distinguish and refine; the excellent Chillingworth might debate and decide, decide and debate again, and lose and disquiet himself in the shifting and uncertain shadows of his learning; St. Augustin might confess with what labor, with what sighs, the truth could be at last elicited. No such unintelligible embarrassments disquieted the vulgar, or men who were like the vulgar; to be dogmatic, it was only necessary *then*, as it is *now*, to be sufficiently ignorant or unfeeling; and Europe everywhere exhibited a proof, which will on every occasion be repeated, that the mass of mankind, though they understand not the controversies of theologians, can easily be inflamed about them, can readily seize upon badges of distinction, and invent terms of reproach for the purposes of mutual hostility, — find no difficulty in associating with their own vindictive passions the cause of the Most High, and, in this frightful state of presumption and blindness, stand prepared for any outrage that can be proposed to them, and bid defiance alike to every expostulation of reason and precept of religion.

It is on these accounts that the statesmen of the world are always so justly alarmed, when they foresee the interference of the religious principle in the concerns over which they preside, and the true Christian is more than ever compelled to examine the religious spirit and the practical precepts of any denomination of Christians by the great criterion of their consistence with morality; and if he once discerns that this spirit and these precepts oppose themselves to our moral feelings, to that great religion which the Almighty has, from the first, written upon the hearts of all men, that great original code of mercy and justice to which our Saviour himself so constantly appeals in his parables and discourses, — if he once discovers that there are any speculative or practical conclusions which clash with these great laws of the Moral Governor of the world, such conclusions will need with him no further refutation; he will be at no loss to determine, from their very nature, that they must be derived from some misapprehension, or some exaggeration, or some exclusive consideration of particular passages in Scripture, and that, assuredly, they are not sanctioned by the authority of revelation.

I have, in my lecture of yesterday, next observed, that great evils were to be expected from the mixture that would necessarily take place, of the politics of the world with the more spiritual concerns of the religious principle; and more particularly, that the question

of the ecclesiastical patronage could not fail to produce the most afflicting animosities and irremediable confusion.

These observations will be found but too well illustrated by those parts of the history of Europe which we are next to advert to. To prove the truth of them would be to relate the transactions which you are now immediately to read, — the civil and religious wars in France, the wars in Germany, down to the peace of Westphalia, the wars in the Low Countries, and even in our own island. Everywhere you will see the ordinary motives of contest and ambition acting and reacted upon by the religious principle, and all the more theoretical causes for contention and rage continually exasperated and perpetuated by the more practical considerations of the disposal of the ecclesiastical revenues. I need not further insist on this point; the history will show you what you may already easily conceive.

I have now arrived at the last of the observations which I proposed to your consideration, — that, to compensate for these evils, particular benefits might probably result to mankind from the rise and progress of the Reformation.

On recurring to the history and to the facts, these benefits will be found such as might have been expected, such as have been already described as likely to ensue. The Bible was opened; those particular pretensions and doctrines of the Roman Catholic Church which were so destructive of the morality and religion of mankind were successfully combated; the chain of authority was broken, and the appeal was transferred from Popes and general councils to the Scriptures themselves.

Such were the immediate, the invaluable, blessings that resulted. But a distinction is now to be made between those good effects that more immediately and those that more remotely followed the Reformation, — between those that Luther and the first Reformers *meant* to produce, and *saw* produced, and those which they did not see, and might not perhaps mean to produce. Now the first we have already mentioned, — the opening of the Bible, — the establishment of a purer faith. We must therefore next advert to the latter.

The first Reformers, while they were struggling to deliver themselves and mankind from the authority of the Church of Rome, asserted the right of private judgment. When this emancipation from the authority of the Pope was once effected, it was natural for them to lay down, in their turn, what they believed to be the doctrines of religious truth. It was natural for them to conceive, that those who opposed their new creeds, so evidently deduced, as they thought, from the Sacred Scriptures, misused, and dangerously misused, that right of private judgment which had thus been procured. It was natural for them to call for the interposition of legislative authority, for the assistance of the secular arm, and to endeavour to become, in their turn, a new Church of Rome, though certainly very distinguishable in religious doctrine and in moral practice.



But when the right of private judgment had been by the Reformers once happily exerted, it was in vain to prescribe limits to its activity. A spirit of inquiry had arisen, and who was to stay its progress? Who was to define the boundaries within which the human heart was to hope and fear, — within which the human understanding was to doubt and discover? The earthly means by which this second emancipation of the human mind was effected, this second emancipation which the first Reformers did not mean to produce, are sufficiently evident. They were found in the revival of learning and the invention of printing: these secured the victory that had been obtained over the Roman see. The Reformers had everywhere encouraged the study of the Greek language, and the meaning of the texts of the New Testament was thus brought within the comprehension of the more intelligent part of society. Men of education, though laymen, could no longer distinguish between themselves and their spiritual teachers. With the same longings after immortality, the same terrors of the future, the same revelation proposed to them, and the means of interpreting its doctrines and its precepts now common to both, no further distinction remained between them, — between the layman and the priest, — none but that of superiority of learning in the clerical character, or greater purity of manners; no further spiritual influence but such as did and ought to belong to more regular and extensive erudition and more settled and anxious piety.

The action and reaction of this freedom of private judgment has been productive of the most salutary consequences both to the clergy and the laity. The two characters have been more assimilated to each other, materially to the benefit of both. This is that silent and still more important reformation which slowly succeeded to the more visible and to the important reformation in the days of Luther, of Calvin, and of Cranmer; and it is not the less real because it may or may not stand acknowledged in the creeds or legislative acts of the different churches or states of Christendom.

But the same freedom of the mind, which had been successfully asserted by the Reformers in religious subjects, extended itself afterwards to every department of human inquiry. The nature and different provinces of civil and ecclesiastical power were examined and ascertained, and the temporal as well as spiritual concerns of mankind were delivered from their long and injurious bondage. The world of science, too, was now thrown open, and men had no longer to be checked in their curiosity or debarred the exercise of their natural faculties, while investigating the laws of nature, by the terrors of the Inquisition or the disapprobation of their temporal and spiritual rulers. The same right of private judgment came, at length, to be exercised on the more abstruse subjects of speculative inquiry, on the original principles of metaphysics and morals. Even

the evidences of religion itself became subjects of discussion; and they who had not the means of investigating truth themselves, the illiterate and the busy, might be consoled by perceiving that such means were amply in the possession of others, and that belief in authority might now be reasonable, when no authority was evidently acknowledged but the authority of truth.

Lastly, it must be observed, that, although the religious principle mingled itself most unhappily with the temporal politics of Europe, its interference was in some respects productive of the most permanent and beneficial effects. The Reformers, through all their different varieties of opinion, were necessarily, till they became themselves the established sect, the friends of religious liberty. But with the rights of religious liberty the rights of civil liberty were naturally connected; the cause, therefore, of civil freedom was always the cause of the Reformers, — a cause most dear to them while they were the inferior sect, and more congenial to them whenever they became the superior. It is not easy to estimate the salutary influence that came thus to operate upon the different constitutions of civil polity in Europe, particularly in our own island. It is not too much to say, that, had it not been for this animating spark, the civil rights of mankind, on the decline of the feudal system, would have expired under the increasing power which the sovereign at that critical period everywhere obtained.

The Reformation, when considered, as it ought to be, in all these points of view, may be reasonably represented as one of the greatest events, or rather as the greatest event, in modern history. To the Reformation we owe not only the destruction of the temporal and spiritual thralldom of the Papacy, the great evil with which Europe had to struggle, but to the Reformation we may be said to owe all the improvements which afterwards took place, not only in religion, but in legislation, in science, and in our knowledge of the faculties and operations of the human mind, — in other words, all that can distinguish the most enlightened from the darkest periods of human society.

I must now proceed to mention such books and treatises as may, I think, be sufficient to give proper information with respect to this memorable struggle for the purity of religion and the freedom of the human mind. But I must observe, in the first place, that on the subject of the Reformation, above all others, it is not for me to offer any limits to the ardor of the student or the extent of his inquiries. Endeavouring, however, as usual, to make what I recommend as practicable as possible, and to mention as few, not as many, books as the subject admits of, I am inclined to propose to the student to read, first, the history of the Reformation in Robertson's *Charles the Fifth*; next, the history of Charles the Fifth in Coxe's *Austria*; next, that of the Reformation in Mr. Roscoe's *Leo the Tenth*; and



lastly, the same subject in the fifty-fourth chapter of Gibbon. After these have been considered, I would have him turn to Mosheim, and read the introduction and first four chapters that relate to the Reformation in the fourth volume of our English edition. He may then begin at the second part, and read the history of the Lutheran and Reformed Churches; turning afterwards to the first part, to consider, more particularly at the close of it, the history of the Romish Church. He will then, I conceive, have a very adequate idea of the causes that led to the first rise of the Reformation, of the events that attended its progress, and of its consequences; nor is the course of reading thus proposed long. Each of the writers mentioned has his separate and different merits, and you will find the original authors referred to, and all the respectable writers on the subject mentioned, if you choose to weigh the merits of the modern historians I have recommended, or of those who were themselves actors in these memorable scenes.

In the general subject of the Reformation there are three great divisions: the causes which led to it; the events that attended its progress; the consequences which resulted from it. I do not detain you with commenting here upon topics which you will find regularly considered in the writers I have referred to. But the last is the most extensive. Effects have been produced, so many and so important, upon the morals and the manners, upon the arts, literature, sciences, knowledge, religion, and politics of Europe, that properly to display them would require a work exclusively appropriated to the subject, and for which no ability or information would be entirely adequate.

Some notion of the nature of such a subject may be formed, not only from the writings I have mentioned, but more particularly from a work which I may now mention,—the Prize Essay of Mr. Villers, on the Spirit and Influence of the Reformation of Luther. The reader will find the author a man of talents, and soon perceive that he is a Frenchman. The essay is written, as might be expected, not in a manner sufficiently composed and modest; but from the midst of those imposing views and sweeping assertions which are so grateful to French authors, when they write exclusively on any particular subject, and which are so justly troublesome and embarrassing to the more natural mind of an English reader, some rational views may be after all selected, and the student will, on the whole, find his mind, by the perusal of the essay, enlarged and enriched, and far better enabled to form its own judgment than before. Mr. Villers lays down the happy effects of the Reformation on the progress of knowledge and the liberty of thought in the most unqualified manner, and he may be compared in these points with some of our own English writers, Gibbon and Roscoe, whom I have mentioned, and who think very differently on this particular part of the subject. The great

divisions of the essay are the influence of the Reformation, first, on the political situation of the states of Europe, and, secondly, on the progress of knowledge. The first will, I think, be found of most value. There is a good life of Luther prefixed, borrowed from Robertson and others, and an appendix which contains a sketch of ecclesiastical history, and which, as a sketch, seems able, and, on the whole, may not be without its use. The section which treats of reformations in general is the worst part of the whole. I see in Mr. Hallam's last work that he does not think Villers an original inquirer.

Thus much for the history of the Reformation in general, and here I might close all further disquisition on these objects of our inquiry. But an English student will naturally turn with more peculiar interest to the fortunes of the Reformation in his own country; and I must therefore say a few words, before I conclude my lecture, on this more particular portion of the general subject.

The student must, in the first place, have been much pleased, when he was considering the causes of the Reformation in Robertson and other writers, to observe the striking merits of his countryman, John Wickliffe. He will find an account of him in Henry's History of England, in Neal's History of the Puritans, in Fox's Book of Martyrs, and in the third volume of Mosheim, where he will see a reference given to a more complete and regular history of his life; lastly, in Milner's Church History. Nothing can be more creditable to any man than to anticipate the discoveries of a subsequent age, to be already as enlightened as those who live a century and a half afterwards. Such was the exalted merit of Wickliffe; the Reformers seem in no respect to have surpassed, many not to have equalled him. What is still more extraordinary is, that he was allowed to die as peaceably as if he had not been wiser than the rest of the world.

The student may now turn to the history of the Reformation as given by Mr. Hume. It is always desirable to consider a subject in as simple a form as possible, and on this account I would recommend you to pause at the end of his reign of Elizabeth or James; for the materials afforded for your reflection in the subsequent reigns will remain the same, only exhibited to your view in colors still more striking.

Turning to the account which now remains in Mr. Hume's work after his last corrections and omissions (for those who wrote against him wrote against passages which you will now not find), I have the following observations to submit to your reflection.

The cause of the Reformers, in their first struggle with the Church of Rome, which I distinguish from their subsequent contests with each other, was the cause of truth, of religion, and of all the best interests of society. Now the proper and just and natural influence of so sacred a cause on the human mind is not duly observed or properly respected by Mr. Hume, and the student must not suffer



himself to be insensibly led into so striking an injustice to such virtuous men, and into so thoughtless an indifference to such sacred principles. It would not be fair to try Mr. Hume by a single sentence which may have been inconsiderately written, but the reader may proceed through all the causes of the progress of the Reformation which are mentioned in this part of his History, and he will see those that are secondary and those that are not creditable to the Reformers chiefly and indeed alone insisted upon. It is not that causes are mentioned that did not operate, but that the natural and just efficacy and influence of truth and religious inquiry, when opposed to the gross doctrines and abuses of the Papacy, are overlooked. The fault here is considerably analogous to the fault committed by Mr. Gibbon in his fifteenth and sixteenth chapters, with respect to the propagation of Christianity. He produces and dwells upon every cause but the main and the right one, that on which the rest depended.

Again, objections that belong to some of the Reformers are transferred to all, and made characteristic of the whole cause. In all questions, civil as well as religious, there is no species of injustice against which the student should be so much on his guard as this. None is so common; good and wise men are continually made to answer for the bad principles and bad conduct of others, with whom they indeed agree, but agree only as to certain points. It is often the ungenerous artifice of their opponents, and always the custom of the vulgar, to confound these distinctions, however real.

Again, improper motives are sometimes imputed to the Reformers. Our nature is made up, as it is well known, of various ingredients; our best principles readily associating with, and often assisted by, motives not the most dignified. But it is not philosophical, neither is it a part friendly to mankind, to rob our virtues of their due share in those actions which they so *contribute* to produce, if they do not entirely produce. A species of injustice like this is one of the chief fallacies in the works of Rochefoucauld, Mandeville, and the licentious moralists.

Again, the people are represented by Mr. Hume as passive with respect to religion, and as ready to receive any form or description of it. But the student is not thence to conclude, as too many have done, that this is an argument against *all* religion. True religion as well as false religion may be taken upon authority. The original question of the truth or falsehood of a religion remains the same. An argument, indeed, may be hence adduced for the freedom of religious inquiry, that the people may see that others inquire, though they cannot; but this is the proper conclusion, not an indiscriminate conclusion against all religion whatever.

Lastly, there is through the whole of Mr. Hume's recital a certain air of carelessness with respect to religion, and a readiness to repre-

sent all warmth on the subject, even in these very peculiar times, as fanaticism. Mr. Hume's opinions in religion are well known, and all this might have been expected. You will therefore take into your account these particular opinions. Assuredly, Mr. Hume, as an historian, should not have taken his own view of the question of religion for granted, and should not have confounded the warmth of men, when opposed to the abuses of religion, with their fury, when encountering each other,—when contending, not for the opening of the Bible, but for some speculative point in divinity, or when persecuting each other on account of some vestment or ceremony, in itself of no importance.

When these cautions have been premised, I am not aware that you can be otherwise than materially instructed by the penetrating remarks of this historian on the effects of the religious principle during these singular times. No man should turn entirely away from the criticisms even of his enemy. The most religious man may be taught lessons by some of the comments of this powerful writer; and the more blind tenets of the Papists on the one hand, and the more fantastic whims of the Puritans on the other, whenever they appear, may surely be surrendered to his mercy.

Along with Hume, I would recommend Burnet's History of the Reformation. No cautions need be suggested before the perusal of the laborious work of this impartial and liberal Churchman, an ornament to his order, and who deserved the name of Christian.

Fox's Book of Martyrs should be looked at. It is, indeed, in itself a long and dreadful history of the intolerance of the human mind, and at the same time of the astonishing constancy of the human mind; that is, it is at once a monument of its lowest debasement and its highest elevation. The volumes of Fox are also everywhere descriptive of the manners and opinions of the different ages through which the author proceeds. The transactions relating to Anne Askew, the disputations of Lambert before Henry the Eighth, of Latimer, Ridley, and Cranmer at Oxford, with the examinations and sufferings of these eminent martyrs, should be thoroughly read, and may serve as specimens of such atrocious, and, at first sight, such astonishing scenes.

Fox may always be consulted, when the enormities of the Papists are to be sought for. Those of the Protestants may be collected from Burnet, or rather may be seen in Neal's History of the Puritans, and in Dodd's Church History; and of Dodd you will see an account in Chalmers's Biographia Britannica. He did not put his name to his work. I have placed in a note-book on the table some particulars, which, though not necessary for a Roman Catholic audience, may not be without their edification to an audience of Protestants, and of members of the Church of England.

In Dr. Lingard's History we may consider ourselves as now re-



ceiving what we have never before had, — a statement of the case of the Roman Catholics, by one of their own body, at a proper distance of time from the events.

The account which is given by Dr. Robertson of the Reformation in Scotland must be considered ; it is not only valuable as describing the rise and progress of the Reformation in a part of our own island, but it is enriched by many reasonable observations on the Reformation, and on reformers in general. Robertson must be compared with Hume ; some difference may be observed in their accounts.

Hume certainly intended to make the Reformers of Scotland odious and ridiculous. He had great powers of exciting sentiments of this kind, on whatever occasion he pleased ; and he has certainly succeeded in the instance before us. It is quite necessary, therefore, that a very valuable book lately published by Dr. M'Crie should be read. His *Life of Knox* will correct our present notions in many important points. Knox does not seem to have been altogether the ferocious, unfeeling barbarian that we suppose, though he was most vehement, and on the subject of Popery most intolerant. He was, however, much the same in nature and merit with many of the great Reformers of England and of the Continent, and had greater influence here, as well as in Scotland, and was from the first a more important person, than the general reader is aware of.

It is very desirable, that, along with Mr. Hume's *History*, some work like this of Dr. M'Crie should be well meditated. For the situation of Europe at the breaking out of the Reformation should be known ; what Popery was, and what were its tenets and ceremonies ; in short, what was the battle, — according to a favorite image of Knox, — what was the battle which the Reformers had to fight ; and what was the piety, what the invincible confidence in the cause of truth, with which these first Reformers, these great representatives of some of the highest qualities of the human character, were animated. No book will serve this purpose better than this *Life of Knox* by Dr. M'Crie. Some misrepresentations in Mr. Hume's account are also pointed out, sufficient to show that this historian is not to be trusted when he has to describe the conduct of the professors of religion. It may be added, that the student will derive from the work a more favorable impression of the Presbyterian communion than he has hitherto, in all probability, entertained. New impressions of this kind are valuable. Different sects of Christians should know what are the more appropriate merits as well as faults of each other. They always content themselves with the latter, — the faults.

I must mention, before I conclude, the last two volumes of Dean Milner's *Ecclesiastical History*. They are written, like the principal part of the work by his brother, upon a particular system of doctrine ; but with this, as a lecturer of history, I have no concern. The reason for which it is necessary that I should recommend them

to your attention is this, — that they contain, particularly in the life of Luther, the best account I know of the more intellectual part of the history of the Reformation; in other words, they contain the progress of the Reformation in Luther's own mind: a very curious subject. Such were the great talents and qualities of Luther, and such was the situation of Europe at the time, that the Reformation, in fact, passed from the mind of the one into the mind of the other. I therefore consider these two volumes, particularly in the lives of Wickliffe and Luther, as a most entertaining and valuable accession to our general stock of information, and one that may be considered as accessible to every student. Dr. Milner appears to me too determined a panegyrist of Luther. This, however, may be forgiven him; not to say that it becomes me to speak with diffidence, when I speak to differ from one whom I know to have been so able and whom I conceive to have been so diligent.

Since these lectures were written, many valuable and interesting works have appeared, — more than I can enumerate: Histories of the Reformation by Mr. Blunt and Mr. Soame; different Lives of Erasmus and Luther; Lives of Wickliffe, Cranmer, and our eminent divines, by Mr. Le Bas, a learned and powerful writer; and many learned treatises connected with the doctrines of our English Church, — that is, with the Reformation; among the rest, some striking observations on Erasmus and Luther by Mr. Hallam, in the first volume of his intended work on the Literature of Europe.

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## LECTURE XI.

### FRANCE.—CIVIL AND RELIGIOUS WARS.

IN my lecture of yesterday I concluded my observations on the Reformation. I must now turn to the French history, and in the following lecture I must endeavour to give you some general notion of the history of a whole century, — the sixteenth.

In considering the first part of this century, I shall have to notice the wars of enterprise and ambition carried on by the French monarchs, Charles the Eighth and his successors. In considering the second part of the century, I shall have to allude to the great subject of the civil and religious wars of France.

These transactions and events cannot be detailed in any manner, however slight. I can only make general remarks, — first on the



one period, and then on the other; mentioning, at the same time, such books as will furnish you hereafter with those particulars on which I am now obliged to comment as if you were entirely acquainted with them already.

We left the French history at the death of Louis the Eleventh; before, therefore, we arrive at the civil and religious wars of France, we must pass through the reigns of Charles the Eighth, Louis the Twelfth, and Francis the First. Of these the reader will be able to form a very adequate idea by reading the works of Mr. Roscoe and Dr. Robertson. These reigns may also be read in Mézeray, a writer of great authority; or they may be read in Hénault, and Millot, and Velly, as the rest of the French history has been. De Thou or Thuanus, it may be also observed, introduces his History with a general review of France and the state of Europe, — a portion of his great work that has been much admired, — and then begins with the year 1546, a little before the death of Francis the First.

The lesson which may, on the whole, be derived from this first half of the sixteenth century is the folly, the crime, of attempting foreign conquest; this is the leading observation I have to offer. Charles the Eighth of France had descended into Italy; Louis the Twelfth must therefore do the same; so must Francis the First and Henry the Second. The honor of the French nation was, it seems, engaged.

But Spain, which was becoming the great rival state in Europe, chose also, like France, to be, as she conceived, powerful and renowned; Ferdinand, therefore, and Charles the Fifth, and afterwards Philip the Second, were to waste, with the same ignorant ferocity, the lives and happiness of their subjects; and for what purpose? Not to keep the balance of Europe undisturbed; not to expel the French from Italy, and to abstain from all projects of conquest themselves; but, on the contrary, by rushing in, to contend for the whole or a part of the plunder.

The Italians, in the mean time, whose unhappy country\* was thus made the arena on which these unprincipled combatants were to struggle with each other, adopted what appeared to them the only resource, — that of fighting the one against the other, — if possible, to destroy both; leaguings themselves sometimes with France, sometimes with Spain, and suffering from each power every possible calamity; while they were exhibiting, in their own conduct, all the degrading arts of duplicity and intrigue. A more wretched and disgusting picture of mankind cannot well be displayed: all the faults of which man, in his social state, is capable; opposite extremes

\* There is a well-known beautiful sonnet in the Italian, translated by Mr. Roscoe, and imitated by Lord Byron, — a lamentation that Italy had not been more powerful or less attractive, — which I have seen an Italian repeat almost with tears.

of guilt united ; all the vices of pusillanimity, and all the crimes of courage.

The miseries and degradation of Italy have never ceased since the fall of the Roman Empire. The great misfortune of this country has always been its divisions into petty states, — a misfortune that was irremediable. No cardinal made into a sovereign could ever be expected to combine its discordant parts into a free government ; and unless this was done, nothing was done : could this, indeed, have been effected, the Italians might have been virtuous and happy.

Artifice, and a policy proverbially faithless, were vain expedients against the great monarchies of Europe. But while Italy was to be thus destroyed by these unprincipled despoilers, what, in the mean time, was to be the consequence to these very monarchies ? In Spain, the real sources of power neglected ; immense revenue, and no wealth ; possessions multiplied abroad, and no prosperous provinces at home ; the strength of the country exhausted in maintaining a powerful army, for the purposes, not of defence, but of tyranny and injustice ; and the whole system of policy, in every part, and on every occasion, a long and disgusting train of mistake and guilt. In France, the same neglect of the real sources of strength and happiness : the produce of the land and labor of the community employed in military enterprises ; the genius of the nobles made more and more warlike ; military fame and the intrigues of gallantry (congenial pursuits) converted into the only objects of anxiety and ambition ; licentiousness everywhere the result, in the court and in the nation ; the power of the crown unreasonably strengthened ; the people oppressed with taxes, their interests never considered ; the energies of this great country misdirected and abused ; and the science of public happiness (except, indeed, in the arts of amusement and splendor) totally unknown or disregarded.

France and Spain, therefore, concur with Italy in completing the lesson that is exhibited to our reflection : ambition and injustice have their victims in the countries that are invaded and destroyed, and have alike their victims in those very invaders and destroyers. Better governments in all, or in any, would have made these evils less ; and good governments are thus, in all times and situations of the world, the *common* interest of every state, as connected with its neighbours, and of every prince and people, as concerned in their own individual happiness.

I now proceed to make some general remarks on the latter part of the century. The remaining half comprehends, in French history, the era of the civil and religious wars, an era that is peculiarly interesting ; and the great difficulty is, to prevent our minds from being overpowered and bewildered by the variety of subjects which present themselves to our examination. The events are striking ; the actors splendid ; the interests important ; and could we see and



understand the scene with the rapidity with which we do the dramas of Otway or of Shakspeare, the effect would be even more powerful and the impression more lasting. But an acquaintance with a great and real tragedy like this, that lasted for nearly forty years, can be acquired only by a course of reading extended to a considerable length and somewhat steadily sustained. To say the truth, it is more than usually perplexing to know, on this occasion, what books to propose. The great historians of the times are Thuanus and Davila; but the work of Davila occupies a very large folio, and the History of Thuanus is extended through nearly six folios in the original Latin, and through nearly ten full quartos in the French translation.

I must therefore explain what I think may be attempted, and what will, I conceive, be sufficient. It will be found that the comprehensive mind of De Thou undertook, and accomplished, the history of all the rest of Europe, as well as of France, and I therefore propose to you to confine your attention to that part which relates to the French history. The quarto work, the French translation, will be the best to resort to; and there will be here no difficulty in selecting the history of France from the remainder of the work. Again, a considerable part of the narrative is employed on the progress of the civil wars in the different provinces of France, and on the military operations of the contending parties. These may now be looked at very slightly. It is the conferences, the assemblies, the manifestos, the treaties, the reasonings and views of the Huguenots and Roman Catholics, to which your observation should be directed. Now these, though they are detailed, and very properly, at great length, by De Thou, do not, after all, constitute a mass of reading which may not, and which ought not, to be undertaken. Even here, some parts may be considered far less attentively than others, and with these limitations, and on this system, I do not hesitate to recommend to your perusal the great work of one of the first of modern historians.

In like manner, Davila may be read in parts; the work may be referred to in all the more important particulars, especially with respect to the views, interests, and intrigues of the different leaders and factions. The narrative is remarkably unaffected, perspicuous, and complete; and every thing is so easy, natural, and relevant to the subject, that the reader who turns to consult the work will unavoidably read on and do more, and perceive, that, if a character is to be estimated, or any particular event to be understood, the account of Davila must necessarily be considered.

The Duke of Epemon, an actor in these scenes, is related by his biographer to have been pleased with this History; and above all, to have commended the exact care which the author had taken to inform himself of the secret motives by which the different parties and

leaders were actuated at the time. But we must not forget, that the family of Davila, and himself, were connected with Catherine de Médicis; that he has been considered as her apologist; that he was an Italian, and a soldier; and that every thing with him is, of course, referred to faction or to selfishness. Ideas of civil or religious liberty seem little to have occurred to him; and the reader is to consider his History as supplying him with materials which he must combine with those of other writers, — not in any instance as furnishing him with conclusions to which he is to assent without due hesitation.

De Thou is likewise an historian of facts and of detail, but his sentiments are generous and enlarged; and the student, while he reads what men were, and but too often are, will never be suffered to forget what they ought to be.

French literature is not so eminently distinguished for great regular works of history as for memoirs of the great characters of history. Books of this kind are, of all, the most amusing; and, when inspected by a philosophic eye, are often well fitted to afford the most important conclusions. The Memoirs of Brantôme are of this description. The writer is, of all others, himself the least of a thinker or of an instructor; but he goes on with the most captivating rapidity and variety, often superficial and inconsistent; panegyricizing every one he has to speak of, without the slightest moral discrimination, but always supplying the reader with those traits of character and peculiarities of conduct which render his personages known and familiar to us, — no longer seen in the cabinet or the field, but exhibited in the recesses of private life, just as they really were, with all the whims and follies that belong to them.

The Memoirs of Sully finish the portrait of these times, not only in finishing for us the portrait of Henry the Fourth, but in giving us many curious particulars respecting the practical government of France, its finances, factions, and the whole state of its constitution and interests. The Memoirs, indeed, are but a mass of papers arranged by his secretaries and drawn up under his eye, and it is much to be lamented that this upright minister did not extend his virtuous activity to the more regular composition of a more finished history. But, such as it is, it is still authentic and particularly valuable, and must be read. There has been lately a new edition and translation of this work.

These are all original works, and, in the manner I have mentioned, may be perused.

A new edition of the work of Brantôme was in 1812 published in Paris. It will be far more than supplied to an English reader by a work of Mr. Wraxall, — “Memoirs of the Kings of France of the Race of Valois,” — which is collected from various writers of this kind, is but too amusing, and, as a companion to the greater histories, perfectly invaluable.



There is also a regular "History of France," by Mr. Wraxall, from which the reader will derive the greatest assistance, while engaged with the original works of De Thou and Davila. It is even quite necessary to him. The narrative is drawn from many more writers than could possibly be read, or even easily be consulted; and the particulars, brought together with great diligence, give a very perspicuous and complete view of the characters and events of these times. The work, after having been long neglected, chiefly, I should think, from the anxious and critical nature of the times when it appeared (1795), was republished by the author in 1814, and enriched, as he supposes, — disfigured, as I conceive, — by allusions to Bonaparte and modern politics. This work of Mr. Wraxall, with the Abbé de Mably, may be sufficient for the general reader. D'Anquetil's work, "L'Intrigue du Cabinet," may be added.

Since I wrote this lecture, a work has appeared by Lacretelle, — his History of France during the Religious Wars of France. This work, with the Abbé de Mably, may be also sufficient. The matter of the first volume you will find better in Robertson, and so of other parts of the work in our own historians; but this part of the French history which we are considering he gives in a very concise, agreeable, interesting manner. He touches upon the right points, and will facilitate the reading of other French historians, if you choose to read them also. He is too great a panegyrist of Henry the Fourth, and does not take sufficiently into account the effect of the religious principle, while explaining the history of these times; that is, while explaining the history, he seems not to feel how respectable, how sublime, may be the principle, the devotion to the cause of sacred truth, in many persons, while it may transport some men into fanaticism, and again, in others, may be mixed with worldly considerations. He has something of the fault of Davila, with whom every thing is a mere struggle of ambition.

But while this part of the history of France is read, in whatever author, English or French, the observations upon it by Mably must be studied; they are more than ever able and important.

This lecture was written many years ago, and I have now described such authors and memoirs as have been always studied by the readers of history. But there has lately appeared a work, that, as far as the general reader is concerned, may be a substitute for them all. It was drawn up for the Theological Library by the late Mr. Smedley, a most excellent man and a very able writer. It consists of three octavo volumes, and gives the history of the Reformed Church in France down to the present times. It is an extremely interesting and valuable work, beautifully done, and entirely to be recommended.

Turning now from the books to be read to such observations as I hope may be useful, I have first to remark, that these dreadful

wars of the latter half of the sixteenth century were of a civil as well as of a religious nature ; they are called the Civil and Religious Wars.

I mentioned, in my lecture on the Reformation, how easily the concerns of religion would mingle with the politics of the world ; how readily each would act and react upon the other ; the rage and rancor that must ensue. This was so much the case in the instance of France, that men appeared almost to lose the common attributes of their nature. Some of the leading particulars seem to have been as follows.

The great families in France, though their free constitution was no more, though they might now be controlled by any prince of ability, who dispensed his favors with care, and suffered none to become too powerful, were still in themselves perfectly able to disturb the state and to shake the monarchy, whenever a man of great enterprise and genius appeared among them, or whenever a weak prince was seated on the throne.

Francis the First, though formed to be the idol of Frenchmen, still carried on a regular system of inspection over his nobles and their proceedings in every place and province of France. "Beware," he said, on his death-bed, to his son, Henry the Second, "beware of the Guises!" His sagacity was but too well shown by subsequent events. The historians, particularly Davila, give a very clear description of the court and of the great men who were ready to contend for power immediately on his decease, and during the reign of his successor, Henry the Second. The chances of confusion were already very sufficient, but they were still further increased when Francis the Second came to the throne ; for not only was he a minor and of no capacity, but the queen-mother was Catherine de Médicis. Charles the Ninth was, again, a minor, and, again, her son ; and she was mother even to Henry the Third, who next mounted the throne after Henry the Second and Francis the Second.

The family of Guise, connected by marriage with the reigning family, produced distinguished men, — two, more particularly, of great genius and of the most aspiring ambition. These were the two men whom Francis the First had dreaded. The Prince of Condé, as a prince of the blood, conceived that the administration naturally belonged to him ; the Constable Montmorency, with the ancient families, had the same pretensions ; and the queen-mother had unhappily resolved to hold the reigns of government herself, and therefore endeavoured to rule all competitors for authority by dividing and opposing them to each other.

As Catherine was a woman of great natural ability, and as Charles the Ninth and Henry the Third were far from being devoid of it, it is probable that the authority of the crown might still have maintained itself and preserved a tolerable state of peace and order ; but it



happened, most unfortunately, that the Prince of Condé was a Protestant, the Constable a Roman Catholic; the court and the Guises were of the Roman Catholic persuasion also; and the people had been inflamed against each other by the natural progress of religious differences. The Prince of Condé, therefore, had only to state the grievances of the Calvinists, and to be their leader, the Duke of Guise to assert the supposed rights of the Roman Catholics, and to declare himself their chief, and long wars of the most exterminating fury were sure to be the consequence.

You will observe the materials of destruction preparing in the horrible execution of the Calvinists by Francis the First, and afterwards by Henry the Second, and in various intolerant edicts that were from time to time published. There is a book, *The Edict of Nantes*, in the first chapter of which may be found an account of the introduction of Calvinism into France, and its first persecutions stated very concisely.

The contests, therefore, of civil and religious hate were now to begin. I cannot relate the facts; I have to observe, therefore, generally, — first, that the commencement of wars, particularly of civil wars, must always be interesting to every reader of reflection. We may turn away our eyes, when the sword has been once drawn, from the crimes and the horrors that ensue; but, till the first fatal act of hostility has been committed, we examine with care, we follow with anxiety, the steps of the contending parties, and we bless in silence those real patriots, if any there be, who have breathed, however vainly, the sounds of forbearance and kindness, — who have expostulated, explained, conciliated, and labored, if possible, to procure a pause. Such sentiments are felt, occasionally, even by the very actors in the scene. A remarkable instance of this kind occurred in this period of the French history.

At the moment when the civil wars were on the point of breaking out, and each party stood prepared and in arms, the Prince of Condé and the queen-mother had a conference, by regular appointment, to adjust, if possible, terms of mutual accommodation. Their followers were ordered to remain at a distance, merely because it was supposed, that, if they approached each other, some word, some look of offence, might be interchanged, and in an instant the kingdom become a scene of blood. They were contented awhile to obey their orders, but they at last, with great difficulty, obtained leave to take a nearer view of each other, that they might no longer appear already occupied by sentiments of estrangement and suspicion. It was then that nature prevailed, for one short and reasonable moment, over all the more artificial impulses of misguided opinion and military duty. They recognized, each, in the ranks of his opponents, his brother, his relation, or his friend; hostility and defiance were at an end; they saluted each other, they embraced, they implored from each other

mutual compassion and forbearance; they deprecated a war, where to conquer was not to triumph; they mingled their tears, the tears of terror as of affection, — of terror, lest the next day should see them, as it did see them, drawn out in fearful combat with each other, to be friends and brothers no more, to destroy, to pursue even to agony and death, each the generous and gallant man that the chance of battle presented to his sword. — And why were scenes like these to ensue? The Prince of Condé required, it seems, that the new Leaguers should leave the court, and that the late tolerant edict should be observed. “The first does not meet my wishes,” said the queen-mother; “the second is impossible. Were we to think further of this edict, all the clergy, a great part of the nobility, and almost all the nation, would be against us.” And these were the unhappy obstacles in the way of peace that could not be removed!

If there be any principle necessary to mankind, it is that of the civil obedience of the subject, that principle by which the single mind of the ruler is able to direct and control the physical strength of millions; if there be any one good that is totally invaluable to our helpless condition, it is religion. But there are seasons in the history of mankind when we are tempted almost to wish that men could be disrobed at once of all the distinctions and ties which belong to their social state, and thrown again into the woods to take the chance of savage existence, rather than be suffered so frightfully to abuse, so intolerably to waste, the best materials of their happiness, and the first blessings of their nature. It is on this account that the wars of faction, and more particularly, as in this case, of religious faction, should be most thoroughly studied; that, as much as possible, not only the nature of ambition should be known, but the temptations of the religious principle, when interfering in the affairs of the world, should be understood; that, as much as possible, mankind may be put upon their guard, not only against their rulers, but against themselves, — not only against their own vices, but against the most virtuous tendencies of their nature.

I now proceed to some further comments on transactions to which I can in no other way but in this, of general comment, allude. The great leading conclusions to be deduced from these wars are much the same as have been already drawn from the prior history of the Reformation; as,

1st. The slowness with which the doctrines of toleration are comprehended even by the best men. The celebrated Preface of Thuanus, his Dedication to Henry the Fourth, the speeches and reasonings of the great magistrates of the realm, and of all the friends to order and peace, such as they are given in his History, all lead to this conclusion. Forbearance to the Protestants is never argued upon any general principles, such as the right of private judgment, —



but upon the inefficacy of force and punishment to convince men of their errors. Good men, even if sufficiently enlightened, could probably then venture on no other language, and, indeed, naturally adopted the argument that admits of no answer. The parties themselves seem always to have supposed, each, that the other was abominable in the sight of the Creator, and that; as such, they were to be punished and subdued by all who had any proper sense of religion.

The wars were repeatedly closed and renewed. The court and the Catholics could never rest satisfied, on the one side, while the Protestants exercised their religion in the face of day; and the Protestants, on the other side, could never bring themselves to believe that they were in a state of proper security. The manifestos, edicts, and mutual complaints indicate very completely the particular nature of religious animosity, and should, therefore, be well studied.

2dly. The difficulties in the way of concord were the same as they have always been. The questions to be settled were, the exercise of public worship, the payment of tithes to the ministers of the prevailing communion, the admission to places of honor and influence; and in these civil wars the Calvinists were so inferior in strength to their opponents, that even the education of their children, the rites of burial and marriage, the equal participation of the laws, and other similar considerations, were all subjects of contention.

But, though always defeated in the field, though always inferior in number and resources to their opponents, they were never totally subdued. It is said that in number they were not above one tenth of the whole. Before the civil wars began, they were dragged to the stake; but during them, they continually obtained edicts which rendered their existence more tolerable. Like their gallant and virtuous leader, the Admiral Coligny, they never despaired of the common cause, and were thus enabled to procure something like forbearance and respect from their unenlightened opponents. The sort of success that they obtained, and the injuries they inflicted on their adversaries, are calculated to teach mankind, not only that men cannot be influenced in their religious opinions by force, but that every sect is to be managed, even on the mere principles of worldly policy, with proper deference and kindness; that the objects clamored for by the bigoted are not worth the risk of such contention as they may occasion; that men, whether right or wrong, and with or without success, will die in support of what they think the truth; and that they may often be enabled thus to die, amid the calamities and slaughter of their persecutors.

3dly. There were conferences of divines to settle religious differences, as in other countries, during and after the Reformation, and with the same ill success. An account of one of them, where the celebrated Theodore Beza took a distinguished part, is given by De

Thou. The whole relation is curious and instructive. But disputations like these, what are they? Lambert disputed before Henry the Eighth against his bishops, and was defeated. A Protestant divine was in like manner overpowered before Henry the Fourth in France, as would, no doubt, have been a Roman Catholic divine before Elizabeth in England. Public disputations of this kind are characteristics of the age, and indicative of the natural tendencies of the human mind on these subjects; they should therefore be considered.

When, indeed, Henry the Fourth afterwards announced, that he was ready to be converted, if proper arguments could be offered to him, the reasonings of the Roman Catholic divines were successful, and they demonstrated to him the doctrines of auricular confession, the invocation of saints, and the spiritual authority of the Papal see. These, it seems, were the points on which the scruples of the king had happened to fall. On the doctrine of transubstantiation he had no difficulty. All history thus shows, what all theory announces, that speculative truth, particularly in religious questions, can be left with best advantage to the silent influence and ultimate decision, not of creeds and councils, but of free inquiry.

Again, there appeared in these religious wars the same want of good faith that has so often marked the conduct of the ruling sect, the same inextinguishable resentment, the same unwillingness to be satisfied while their opponents were suffered to appear in any state but that of total degradation and submission; and then the next lesson is this, — that the whole of the history bears testimony to the impolicy of a temperament so unjust and so irreligious. Even the massacre of St. Bartholomew extinguished not the evil which the court meant to remedy; it only made their anxieties, and perhaps even their dangers, the greater.

Thus far the religious wars of France seem to exhibit the same features and lessons of instruction that are presented by other religious wars, whatever be the ruling sect, the Roman Catholic or the Protestant. But in one respect these were distinguishable from all others that Europe has witnessed, — their more than usual horrors, their singularly atrocious crimes; in none others were all the charities and obligations of mankind so violated, and all the common principles of mercy and justice so outraged and set at naught. This seems to indicate not only the necessity of a free government to humanize men, but also that the members of the Roman Catholic communion are of all sects the most intolerant and cruel.

The reason is, that they are more under the influence of their spiritual guides; and every sect will be found more or less intolerant and cruel, as this is more or less the case. A spiritual director, like every human being, abuses the power that is given him. The more unlimited the power, the greater the abuse; and whether it be the Bramin in the East, the Calvinistic preacher in Scotland, or the Ro-



man Catholic priest in France and Spain, the effect proceeds from the same cause, and is proportioned to it. The spiritual guide, in these cases, generally deceives himself, and always deceives his follower, by considering the cause in which his passions have got engaged as the cause of the Deity. And yet, strange as it may seem, it appears from this very history that men may sometimes teach themselves the same identification of their own religious opinions with the cause of the Deity, by the workings of their own mind, even *without* the interference of any spiritual instructor.

For instance, Poltrot (Vol. iii. p. 394, De Thou) assassinated the first Duke of Guise. "Poltrot had embraced," says the historian, "with great ardor, the *Protestant* faith; and, enraged at the success of this great Catholic leader, he resolved to destroy him. He had thrown himself on his knees to ask in prayer from the Almighty whether his design to kill the tyrant, as he called him, was, or was not, derived from heaven. He had implored to be accordingly fortified in his resolution, or not; and he perpetrated the murder under the belief that he had been inspired to do so." Poltrot was a Protestant, and had no spiritual director; but Smedley considers Poltrot only as a ruffian, not as a fanatic. — p. 263, vol. i., of his *Religious Wars*.

On a principle of this kind, and, what is still more dreadful, generally with the sanction of the deliberations and reasonings of some priest or confessor, was the life of Henry the Third taken away, and that of Henry the Fourth several times attempted. Even the enthusiasm of Ravallac, who at last assassinated Henry the Fourth, though it reached insanity, was religious insanity: so careful should all religious men be never to lose sight, for a moment, of their moral obligations; if they once do, it is impossible to say what point of enthusiasm, or even of guilt, they may not reach.

But not only were murders of this nature committed, but a massacre (I allude to the massacre of St. Bartholomew), a massacre of every person of consequence that belonged to the inferior sect, under cover of a reconciliation, was actually both conceived and almost entirely perpetrated, — and that by the first people of rank in France, regularly deliberating, contriving, and executing, slowly and systematically, what is not pardoned to human nature even in her wildest transports of sudden fury and brutal folly. With all the latitude that can be imagined for civil and religious hatred, nothing but evidence totally irresistible could reconcile the mind to the belief of such an astonishing project of guilt and horror. The entire and total separation and hatred that existed between the two religious sects must have been carried to an extent now inconceivable, or such a scheme could never have been devised, and still less executed. Could it have been supposed possible that such a secret as this would have been so kept, that a certain portion of the whole community, an

entire description of brave men, should be slaughtered in their beds and in the streets, in the capital and in the provinces, to the amount of seventy thousand human beings, without the slightest chance of combination or resistance against their murderers? Yet such was the fact.

All memoirs and historians make mention of this massacre of St. Bartholomew; and each becomes worth consulting, by noticing some particulars not noticed by the rest. Davila, at other times so interesting from his minuteness, and judicious minuteness, disappoints expectation. The subject could not well be dwelt upon by an historian like him, who must have *wished*, at least, to think well of Catherine, with whose court he had been connected. De Thou enters more into the detail.

After the first emotions of astonishment, indignation, and horror have subsided, we may, perhaps, not unprofitably turn to reflect on the manner in which the perpetrators of such atrocities could reconcile them (and they did reconcile them) to their own views of religion and virtue. Men on their death-beds were known to consider the part they took in these extraordinary crimes as meritorious with the Deity. The massacre was defended by reasonings at Rome, by an oration of the eloquent Muretus, by the sermons of divines, and the apologies of men in the highest stations, and even sanctioned by public authority at Paris. The annals of the world do not exhibit so awful an instance (and this is the great lesson to be drawn from these enormities) of the dangerous situation in which the human mind is placed, when it *once* consents, on *whatever* account, whether of supposed religion or imagined duty, to depart from the great and acknowledged precepts of morality. I must for ever press this point upon your remembrance, — the great code of mercy and justice impressed upon the human heart by the Creator; an attention to it can alone keep you safe from the possible delusions of religious zeal.

The Protestant part of Europe at the time, and posterity ever since, have vindicated the rights of insulted reason and religion. It is some melancholy consolation to observe, that even the abominable court itself was, *at first*, obliged to pretend, and their apologists since, that they only anticipated a projected insurrection of the Huguenots. Charles the Ninth seems never to have known health or cheerfulness again: he had pages to sing him to sleep; and he at last died, ere his youth had well passed away, lost and destroyed in body as in mind, and, if possible, an object of compassion. It is indeed true, that Catherine, while urging on her hesitating son, could quote a passage from the sermon of the Bishop of Bitonto, to assure him that pity to a heretic was, in fact, but cruelty, and cruelty pity! But there were governors in some of the provinces that replied to the mandate of their sovereign, — “We are good citizens, we are



brave soldiers, but we are not executioners.” “*Excidat illa dies,*” said the virtuous De Thou, ashamed of his countrymen, —

“*Excidat illa dies ævo, ne postera credant  
Secula: nos certe taceamus, et obruta multâ  
Nocte tegi propriæ patiamur crimina gentis.*”

Mankind, from a sense of their common nature, might wish the same.

Such seem the general reflections that may occur to us while we are engaged in earlier parts of the annals of this period. But in reading the history of these civil and religious wars, you must observe, that, though for some time the Roman Catholics are united with the court in opposition to the Protestants, yet at length a new scene opens, and the contest is carried on against the Protestants by the Roman Catholics *themselves*, with or *without* the assistance of the court. The celebrated combination called “the League” makes its appearance, — a combination independent of the crown, — and the result is, that the throne itself is at last shaken, and the crown nearly overpowered by positive rebellion.

This League, therefore, forms an epoch in the history of these civil and religious wars, and they may thus be divided into two parts, before and after it. This last is, like the former, a portion of history that should be well studied. Davila and De Thou, particularly Davila, should be carefully read. There is also a history of the League by Maimbourg, who lived in the time of Louis the Fourteenth. He is never considered as a writer sufficiently temperate; his hatred of the Calvinists was such, that his representations must always be read with very great caution. You have the work of D’Anquetil on the subject. The whole account is very well given by Wraxall, and to him I refer you. You will find in Lacretelle a concise and intelligible detail of it.

The sum and substance of this part of the history is, that the second Duke of Guise had ability enough to get himself considered as the defender of the Roman Catholic religion; to form a union in support of it, without any authority from the crown; to point the zeal of the Catholics against the king, as an enemy to the faith; to avail himself of the vices and indolence of the prince, and to improve every favorable circumstance so successfully, as at last almost to mount the throne amid an insurrection at Paris; finally, though he did not then mount the throne, to resume his plans, after the king’s escape from the capital, and to urge on his projects, till he was at last himself assassinated by order of the wretched monarch, who could see, as he thought, no other expedient to preserve longer his crown, his liberty, or his life.

Of transactions like these there is, evidently, no part that may not be instructive. I cannot enter into any narrative, but I will, as before, offer some general remarks, to be left for your consideration,

when you come to read the history yourselves. How, for instance, could such an armed union as this of the League ever make its appearance without being instantly put down by the crown? How could it ever be joined by men who did not, from the first, mean to alter the government, or, at least, to change the monarch? Questions like these will show you the importance of these transactions, for they involve in their consideration many points that will always be of importance to every good citizen, and every good government that can be found among mankind.

From a note in Sully, where these transactions are alluded to, it may be collected, that there are several manuscripts in the king's library at Paris that would throw great light on the first origin and progress of this unconstitutional combination. But even in Maimbourg the reader will find (and given, apparently, upon sufficient authority) the first draft of this association, afterwards called "the League," which the Duke of Guise caused to be circulated in a part of France. It is not known to, or at least is not noticed by, the great historians; but it appears to me remarkable, as enabling us to observe the manner by which men may be gradually led from one step to another, till they arrive ultimately at positive rebellion.

The terms of the first association, as given by Maimbourg, not by the great historians, appear to express nothing but devotion to the Catholic religion and loyalty to the monarch. The difficulty must always have been, how to throw power into the hands of the Duke of Guise. In the articles, therefore, there is a chief of the League mentioned, and but slightly; only twice with any distinctness, and always in subordination to the king. The strongest expression is this:—"The chief of the aforesaid association, who is Monsieur D'Humiers, to whom we promise to render all honor and obedience," &c. This chief might evidently have been afterwards altered, and made the Duc de Guise. But in the celebrated formulary of the League, which was at last and afterwards circulated and signed, as it is given by Mézeray, D'Aubigné, and Davila, and as it is understood by De Thou, though there is the same spirit of devotion to the Roman Catholic religion and of loyalty to the king, there is an unlimited obedience distinctly acknowledged to the head of the League, and with these remarkable words annexed,— "Without exception of persons." That is, an obedience was acknowledged, unknown to the constitution of the realm, without bounds, and that ultimately attached itself, not to the king, but to the chief of the League, and to him alone, "without exception of persons."

Here, therefore, is one of those instances in history which are to teach men very carefully to watch over the erection of any power unknown to the constitution of their country, any power which may be brought into competition with the existing authorities; how careful they must be on this point, if they really mean only to im



prove that constitution, and do not mean eventually to overthrow it. This is my first observation; but the history of this League exhibits, among many lessons, another that may be mentioned.

The intolerance of the Roman Catholics, and the zeal of their preachers, were of great, and, indeed, of indispensable, service to the Duke of Guise, in the gradual prosecution of his ambitious designs. During the first part of the history of these civil wars, the Roman Catholic clergy enforced the doctrines of intolerance against the Protestants, and united with the court; that is, they inflamed the animosities of the parties, and, in fact, did every injury to the state and to religion that was possible. During the latter part, the same clergy were employed in the cause of the League, — opposed to the Protestants indeed, and engaged in support of the supposed cause of religion, but opposed to the king also. “The king is no good Catholic,” said the preachers; “religion will be destroyed among us.” I quote from the historian.

Examples of this kind in history have taught statesmen most anxiously to deprecate, at all times, the interference of the ministers of religion in the politics of the state. Their zeal may be virtuous, and often is, but they see every thing through the mist of that zeal; they exaggerate, they inflame the people, they inflame themselves; they set into motion a principle (the religious principle) against which, if it once becomes inflamed, no other principle of reason or propriety can be successfully opposed. They have been naturally accustomed to look in one direction, and they are, therefore, though men of education, seldom able to take a view sufficiently extended of the general interests of the community. This was the opinion even of Lord Clarendon. Such statesmen, therefore, as have meant ill have often converted men of this sacred character into instruments to serve their own political purposes; and such statesmen as have endeavoured well have but too often found them impediments to their designs. All history enforces upon the attention disagreeable conclusions of this nature, and pious and good men should be aware of it; though I cannot mean, that men, because they are clergymen, should cease to be citizens. I state the lessons and admonitions of history, more particularly of this period of history. The impression which it had left on the mind of Mr. Burke must have been of this kind; for when the late Dr. Price, about the beginning of the French Revolution, preached a sort of political discourse at the Old Jewry, which he afterwards published, Mr. Burke was immediately reminded of the very times we are now considering, — the times of the League in France. He mentions them along with the Solemn League and Covenant, so memorable in the history of Scotland and England; and he admonishes the Doctor, that men like him, men of his sacred profession, were unacquainted with the world, and had nothing of politics but the passions they excite.

Another observation must also be made. The Duke of Guise found a no less effective, though more unworthy, support in the king and in the court itself than he did in the clergy; that is, he found a support in their "profligacy, their waste of public money, their scandalous disposal of places of trust and honor, and their total disregard of public opinion. These vices produced in the people that effect which they have invariably done, and which they can never fail to do. It is possible that circumstances may not be sufficiently critical to produce, exactly at the time, insurrections and revolutions; but the materials for these most dreadful calamities are always ready, when such flagitious conduct has been at all persevered in. The great, on these occasions, have no right to blame the populace; they have themselves first exhibited the vices and crimes to the commission of which they were more particularly liable; and the vulgar do no more, when they break out, in their turn, into acts of brutality and ferocity. Manners and principles are propagated downwards, and on this account the lower orders, to a considerable extent, become what they are made by the example of their superiors. This example may be vicious or may be virtuous; in either case, it cannot but have influence.

Lastly, I must remark, that there are several parts of this history of the League that seem almost to have announced to us, two centuries ago, the unhappy events of modern times. When we turn, for example, to the account of the day of the barricadoes in Paris, we have the siege of the Louvre, the Swiss guards, the flight of the king, the tumultuous capital, the committees, and other particulars, that might almost lead us to imagine that we were reading but a detail of the transactions that lately took place in the very same metropolis, — that, in fact, we were engaged in the perusal of the horrors of the French Revolution.

Such are, I think, some of the general reflections which belong to these civil and religious wars in France, in both their different stages, before and after the project of the League.

I must now leave you to read the history for yourselves. I may observe, indeed, before you do so, that these scenes have always been recommended to the interest and curiosity of mankind, not only because they have exhibited in the strongest manner the workings of the two great passions of civil and religious hate, but because times so extraordinary were calculated to produce, and did produce, characters the most extraordinary, — fierce crimes, unbridled licentiousness, but accompanied with great courage and ability in the one sex, and with genius and spirit in the other. These have always more particularly marked this singular era, and have, therefore, had a charm for the readers of history, not derived, I fear, from any very respectable desire either of philosophic entertainment or instruction. Brantôme has always been read; but in the *Memoirs of the House*



of Valois, by Wraxall, may be found an ample specimen of the characters and anecdotes which belong to this part of history; and you may in this work occupy yourselves more than sufficiently in a species of reading by which every one, I fear, may be amused, and no one, I am sure, can be improved.

I must here close my account of these civil and religious wars, which will be found, when perused, too busy in events, and too fertile in character, to be treated in any other but this indistinct and general manner. But as the student is thus supposed to approach the great subject of the civil and religious wars, by which in France, and everywhere in Europe, these ages were distinguished, I cannot conclude this part of my lecture without making one observation more, however obvious. It is this: that the theatre of the world is not the place where we are to look for religion; her more natural province must ever be the scenes of domestic and social life. Too elevated to take the lead in cabinets and camps, to appear in the bustle and ostentation of a court, or the tumults of a popular assembly, amid the struggles of political intrigue, or the vulgar pursuits of avarice and ambition, Religion must not be judged of by the pictures that appear of her in history. The form that is there seen is an earthly and counterfeit resemblance, which we must not mistake for the divine original.

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## LECTURE XII.

### HENRY THE FOURTH, AND THE LOW COUNTRIES.

IN my last lecture I made some remarks on the civil and religious wars of France, before and during the League. The reign of the celebrated Henry the Fourth forms the concluding part of this remarkable era. The great historical French work on the subject of his life and reign is by Péréfixe; but De Thou, Sully, Mably, *L'Intrigue du Cabinet*, with Wraxall, will be the best authors, as I conceive, to recommend to your attention. You may read Lacroix; he is too favorable. You may in these works read the narrative of his eventful life. I cannot enter into it. A few general observations, on the whole, are all that I can attempt to offer.

The situation of Henry, while mounting the throne of France, was so beset with difficulties, that, as we read the history, we can scarcely imagine how he is ever to become successful, though we already know that such was the event. He was a Huguenot, and the nation could

not, therefore, endure that he should be king; he had been leagued with Henry, the former king, while that prince was stained with the blood of the Duke of Guise, the great object of national admiration; he had a disputed title; an able and experienced general to oppose him in Mayenne, the brother of the murdered Guise, backed by a triumphant party, and by the furious Parisians; lastly, he was exposed to the hostile interference of one of the most consummate generals that ever appeared, the Duke of Parma, at the head of the Spanish infantry, then the first in the world. It must be confessed, that Henry, with some assistance from fortune, fairly, slowly, and laboriously won and deserved his crown. This part of the history is well given by Wraxall, from De Thou and others.

But Henry had not only to win the crown, but to wear it, — not only to acquire, but preserve it. Now the great lesson to be drawn from Henry's life is the wisdom of generous policy, the prudence of magnanimity. To these he owed his success. There was nothing narrow in his views, no ungovernable animosity that rankled in his memory: he forgot, he forgave, he offered favorable terms, he negotiated with all the fearless liberality of an elevated mind. The path of honorable virtue was here, as it always is, that of true policy, that of safety and happiness. The result was, that he was served, by men who had been opponents and rebels, more faithfully than other princes have been by their favorites and dependants.

Henry has always been, and with some justice, the idol of the French nation. But in his private life, two fatal passions reduce him, great as he was in public, to a level with his fellow-mortals, and sometimes far below them. It was in vain that the virtuous Sully remonstrated against his passion for play. Again, Henry seems never to have suspected that domestic comfort was to be purchased only by domestic virtue. In respect of the Princess of Condé, such was his licentious nature, such the result, as is always the case, of the long indulgence of his passions, that he is, in this affair, as far as I can understand the history, very little to be distinguished from a mere violent and unprincipled tyrant.

The name of Henry the Fourth may remind us of a celebrated work, the *Henriade* of Voltaire. This extraordinary writer was allowed to be a poet by Gibbon, and an historian by Robertson. The poem will exhibit him in both capacities. It should be read immediately after reading the history of these times. Thus read, it will strike the judgment and refresh the knowledge of the student, while it exercises his taste, and, to a certain degree, animates his imagination. The work was considered by its author merely as a poem, and not a history; but it is now chiefly valuable for the descriptions which it gives of the great characters and events of these times, drawn with great beauty and force, and evidently by the pencil of a master. It will be found very entertaining, read in the way I propose.



On the whole, the striking scenes of this celebrated period in French history (the period of the sixteenth century) attach powerfully on our attention; but we must never forget to remark those incidents which paint the manners, laws, and constitution of any people whose annals we are reading. Incidents of this kind may be found, many of them in De Thou, some in Davila, many more in very inferior authors, such as L'Étoile. Every information of this sort is collected with great diligence and propriety of selection by Wraxall: a large part of his work is very properly dedicated to the delineation of the arts, manners, commerce, government, and internal situation of society, — first, under the later princes of the house of Valois, and, secondly, during the reign of Henry the Fourth.

This author does not seem to have studied the science of political economy with the same diligence which he has exerted in his more immediate department of history, and therefore his conclusions on these subjects must be read with great caution. The science seems to have been still more unknown to the statesmen and historians of France; it is therefore difficult to understand their reasonings, or benefit by their remarks, when such matters are touched upon.

The facts and anecdotes of these times, which Wraxall has collected, exhibit a most afflicting picture of licentiousness and vice. The historian is obliged to acknowledge that he can find only three virtues then in existence, — courage, friendship, and, what could be less expected, “filial obedience”; a scanty catalogue, which it seems cannot be enlarged. Yet was this the age of religious wars! So much more easy it is to contend about religion than to practise it.

The arts of luxury and splendor seem to have been fully displayed in the courts and castles of the great barons. The peasants and lower orders were, in the mean time, lost in wretchedness and ignorance, and debased by oppression. Even the higher orders themselves, amid all their costly excesses, were exposed to many evils and inconveniences which we, of the present day, should consider as quite inconsistent with our personal comfort. So different is the wealth of a country from the riches of a court; so different the progress of the more costly arts from the general improvement of society.

After the personal character of Henry, the events of his reign, and the manners of the times have been considered, the last and great object of inquiry is the constitution of France. If this had received any improvement, however dreadful might have been the effects of these civil and religious wars in other respects, the prospect of future happiness to this great kingdom would have been still open.

What, therefore, we ask, had been the fortunes of the States-General? The answer may, unhappily, be given in the description in

the *Henriade* : — “ Inefficient assemblies, where laws were proposed, rather than executed, and where abuses were detailed with eloquence, but not remedied.” The public seem, indeed, to have felt the weight of taxes ; and complaints and representations were made in these assemblies, which in this manner occasionally reached the throne itself. At two different periods, in 1576, and still more in 1588, an opportunity was offered of at least some effort for the general good, but in vain. The images of liberty had been too long withdrawn from the eyes of the nation, and no reasonable ideas on the subject seem to have been entertained by any leader or description of men in the state. Even the religious reformers seem not, in France, to have felt in themselves, or to have endeavoured to excite in the minds of their countrymen, any of those principles of civil liberty which so honorably distinguished them in other parts of Europe.

In the constitution of France, the only part of the system which the reader can fix upon as yet of consequence to the cause of civil liberty, the only body from which any thing could yet be hoped, was the Parliaments. These assemblies, particularly that of Paris, seem continually to have offered a sort of yielding resistance to the arbitrary power of the crown, — to have been ever ready to assert privileges (to assert or create them) which might, eventually, be of decisive importance to the nation. For instance, they acquired, or retained, the prerogative of registering the edicts of the king. In the exercise of this prerogative, a most important one, it is true they always accommodated themselves to the wishes of the monarch, whenever he insisted upon their compliance : still, the prerogative itself remained in existence ; royal edicts, after all, were not exactly laws ; they became so, only when the Parliaments had given them a last sanction, by consenting to *register* them. Here, then, lay the great secret of the constitution, — how far the king could legally compel this acquiescence ; and here was fixed the proper engine of constitutional control or resistance. You will see its importance when you come to read the history of the French Revolution.

On this subject of the constitution, facts and information may be taken from Wraxall, and above all from Sully, who is an original author and full of them ; but principles and reasonings must be drawn from the Abbé de Mably.

The value of a national representation, as an instrument of taxation, even to the crown itself, may be seen in the history of France. The monarch, it is true, could issue edicts, but the taxes were intercepted by the collectors of them ; though the subject paid much, the crown received little. Arbitrary power is not favorable to the real affluence of the sovereign. For the same notions in the people and in the monarch that lead to arbitrary power lead to abuses of every description : compulsory loans, venality of offices, demands of free gifts, rapacious exactions from opulent traders, destructive imposi-



tions, and anticipations of revenue; habits of expense, improvident management, and a universal system of waste and speculation. But it is in this manner that all the sources of national revenue are destroyed; and if the revenue be not produced, the monarch cannot have a part of it. It was in vain for the prince, even if patriotic, to endeavour to introduce economy into his household and expenses: a large sum might be collected in such a country as France, by a minister like Sully, under a king like Henry the Fourth; but the *Memoirs of Sully* himself resound with the king's embarrassments and poverty. The whole organization of society, from the throne down to the cottage, if the government be arbitrary, is always, to the purposes of a royal exchequer, unfavorable; every instrument that the monarch can employ is, more or less, a bad one. The monarch and court, by the absence of all apparent criticism from public assemblies, themselves lose the necessary discipline and support of virtue. They become themselves, and every one around and below them, expensive and depraved, profuse and needy.

The great accusation to be brought against Henry is, that he did nothing for the liberties of France, nothing for its constitution. He never attempted to turn to the best advantage such a means of improvement as might still have been found in the *States-General*. He labored to be a father to his people, but only because it was his own good pleasure to be so; he forgot that the power which he directed to the benefit of his subjects was to descend to others, — and that it was one thing for a nation to have a good king, and another to have a good constitution.

There are two services, however, which he rendered to the constitution of France, and that by his own merits. First, he prevented the renewal of the government of the fiefs. The great nobles were made so powerful by the civil wars, their followers so familiarized to arms, all order and law so banished from the kingdom, and the governors of provinces were possessed of powers so vast and dangerous, that independent sovereignties might probably have been established, if Henry the Fourth had not been on the throne during the first very critical years that succeeded to the assassination of Henry the Third. Considerable efforts were made by some of the great leaders to have their governments made hereditary, even while Henry the Fourth was their monarch, armed with all his advantages of talents and success. The hereditary governments, if once established, might readily have assumed the nature and privileges of independent sovereignty, and the country been broken up and ruined.

Secondly, he procured for the Protestants the edict of Nantes. The promulgation of this edict must be considered as a sort of conclusion of the religious wars, — wars which, for nearly forty years, desolated France, and had more than realized the dreadful pictures of Tacitus, even when describing the worst times of the worst people.

This celebrated edict will surely attract the curiosity of every reflecting mind. I have already mentioned a work under the title of the Edict of Nantes, and recommended the perusal of the first book. I now recommend the fifth, which will give the reader a very adequate idea of the times and of the subject. The edict itself is at the end of the first volume, and may be easily read. It consisted of ninety-two general articles, and these followed by fifty-six secret articles. After all these have been considered, the observations of the Abbé de Mably may be attended to.

The Protestants, the inferior sect, made the usual demands, and the Roman Catholics the usual objections. The points in debate comprehended all the accustomed difficulties. At length, by the articles of the edict (VI. IX. X.), the Protestants were allowed to live everywhere in France without molestation on account of their private religious tenets, and publicly to enjoy (XIV.) the exercise of their religion in particular places, though not in the metropolis, or within a certain distance of it.

You will look, I hope, at these articles, particularly the secret articles. I cannot further allude to them as I could wish to do, for in this lecture, as in every other, I am restricted to a certain time; but I must at least point out to you the twenty-seventh article, which is to us more particularly interesting, as the policy of our own country has been different, and as the wisdom of our policy has been very reasonably disputed.

By the twenty-seventh article of the edict, the Protestants (the Dissenters in France) were rendered eligible to all offices, without exacting any other oath from them but (I quote the article) "well and faithfully to serve the king in the discharge of their offices, and to observe the ordinances as they have been observed at all times"; that is, the test was civil, not religious. Our policy, as seen in our Corporation and Test Acts, is different. These are so contrived, that, with us, Roman Catholics and Dissenters are necessarily excluded from offices; for they are required to take the sacrament after the manner of the Church of England; that is, the test is religious.

The humanity and philosophy of the Abbé de Mably take fire, when he comes to notice this celebrated edict. To establish, he observes, a solid peace between the two religions, there ought to have been established between them a perfect equality. If the Protestants were feared, no exercise of their religion could have been, he contends, too public. Their preachings were otherwise to be rendered always the hot-beds of intrigue, cabal, and fanaticism. Henry, he adds, should have called the States-General, made the parties produce and discuss their claims, then have mediated between them and formed a law, — the law of the whole nation.

To views and observations like these the history itself, and all history, is a melancholy, but sufficient, answer. It is only astonishing,



that, after such scenes as had taken place, Henry could accomplish what he did. Insufficient as it may seem to the Abbé de Mably, it was not effected without the most meritorious exertions on his part, and the assertion of all his authority, with both laity and clergy, particularly the latter. Had he called the States-General, he would only have dignified and organized the opposition which he could scarcely, with the assistance of the most favorable circumstances, overpower. Like a real statesman, he was resolved to do something for the benefit of his country, but was contented when he had done what seemed practicable, when, in short, he had made the best of his materials. It was sufficient for him, as it must often be for others, to have laid the germ of future improvement, which was to ripen, if succeeding times were favorable; if otherwise, to perish.

“See nations slowly wise, and meanly just.”

The account which Sully gives of these memorable transactions is very imperfect and inadequate to their importance. De Thou is more satisfactory; but even by him the subject seems not to have been properly comprehended. You will have some idea of it from Lacretelle.

Some reforms were, however, accomplished by Henry and Sully.

The merits of Henry the Fourth had an easy conquest over the French nation; for he restored them to peace, after the calamities, not only of civil war, but of civil and religious war. Favored by fortune, and recommended by great merit, Henry became at once, and has always remained, the object of universal admiration. It seems but too generally forgotten that Henry made no attempt to revive the constitution of his country. The people of France themselves seem never to have objected this most important fault to him. Mankind, it must be confessed, are ever running headlong in their feelings of praise and censure; and they seem almost justified, when they give the free reins to their confidence and affections in favor of princes who have been their deliverers and protectors.

But it is, unhappily, on occasions like these, after revolutions or great calamities, that a nation loses, as did the French, as did the English at the restoration of Charles the Second, all care of its laws, its privileges, and its constitution. It thinks only of the horrors of the past, and of the comparative enjoyments of the present; slavery itself is a comfort, when compared with the miseries that have been endured; and good princes as well as bad princes have converted to the purposes of their own power these thoughtless, but natural, sentiments, in a fatigued, terrified, and scarcely yet breathing people. No periods have, therefore, been so dangerous to the civil liberties of a country. What Louis the Eleventh had effected was now willingly confirmed; and the whole French nation — a nation of civilized men, quick in intelligence, ardent in sentiment, prodigal in

courage, and the descendants of the Franks — contented themselves with the political blessings of the hour, and in the virtues of their monarch, without thinking of the future, reposed that confidence which should have been given only to some free form of government, — some form of government where their States-General, the proper images of themselves, had been combined with the executive power, and both harmonized into a regular constitution, for the permanent benefit as well of the prince as of the people.

Before I quit this subject, I must again recommend to you an account lately drawn up by Mr. Smedley, a History of the Reformed Religion in France. The work will tell you every thing that it is necessary to know respecting the religious part of the history of these times.

We must now turn to a scene that will have been often presented to us indirectly, during our perusal of these civil and religious wars in France: the contest between Philip the Second and his Dutch and Flemish subjects; the progress of the Reformation in the Low Countries.

We are furnished with sufficient materials for understanding these interesting transactions. We have the Protestant historian, Grotius; the Catholic historian, Bentivoglio; and a very full detail from the Catholic historian, Strada. These may be considered as authors living at the time. We have also a very full history of the Reformation by Brandt, who lived half a century afterwards, when the truth might be still more completely ascertained; and lastly, we have our own historian, Watson, who, from these and other sources, has drawn up his own unaffected and valuable narrative. The whole will divide itself naturally into a few different portions, corresponding with the different governors and changes of system adopted by the court of Spain. But the most instructive is the first, — the interval that elapsed while the Netherlands were gradually advancing to rebellion, and while Philip was endeavouring to establish his fatal system of coercion and intolerance. Now, although the original authors I have mentioned may be more or less freely consulted through the whole of the contest, I would recommend that they should be entirely perused while they give the history of this first period, — the period which preceded the first appearance of the Duke of Alva in the Netherlands.

It is somewhat amusing, but it is surely edifying, to observe the difference of tone and sentiment in the Catholic and Protestant writers. Grotius and Brandt speak a language consistent with civil and religious freedom, as might be expected; while with the other historians all resistance to the civil powers is faction and rebellion, — all controversy with the Church, impiety and irreligion. Strada investigates the causes of the revolt of the Netherlands, and considers and dismisses, as of little importance, such solutions of this event as might



appear to us very adequate to account for it: the introduction, for instance, of a standing army amid a people whose laws and constitution were of a free and popular cast; the forcible increase of a number of ecclesiastical dignitaries; the attempt to introduce the Inquisition; the enforcing of the intolerable edicts of Charles the Fifth. These causes he considers as contributing, indeed, somewhat to the tumults in religion, but the first and true origin of the whole he finds only in heresy. It was this, he conceives, that rendered turbulent the mass of the community; and when to this was added the discontent of the nobles, the rest was of course. Bentivoglio, in like manner, considers religion and the Roman Catholic profession of it as one and the same thing, and seems never to have apprehended that civil obedience had any bounds but the good pleasure of the sovereign.

It is very singular that a Pope's nuncio, like Bentivoglio, coming to the Netherlands just after the close of these dreadful contentions, should write an account of them which even Grotius should pronounce to be an impartial history. It is agreeable to observe that the great duty of an historian is so obvious and indispensable, that it can in this manner be felt and obeyed even by a man like Bentivoglio, who had surrendered all the freedom of his mind on every other subject connected with civil and religious liberty.

Strada had an unfortunate wish to write like Tacitus; but Bentivoglio will in no respect fatigue or repel the reader. After the first four books have been read and compared with Watson, the remainder may be consulted or perused, as the student thinks best.

There seem to me two principal lessons to be drawn from this part of the history of the Low Countries. First, the unhappy effects of intolerance. In this respect the facts and the conclusions to be derived from them are the same as in other countries, and such as we have already noticed. Secondly, the impolicy of all harsh government. The Netherlands were dependencies of the Spanish monarchy. It has never yet been possible to teach any country, or even any cabinet, the wisdom of governing its colonies or dependencies with mildness. The first portion of this history, while Margaret of Parma was in authority, is therefore particularly to be studied; the portion I have already mentioned. She endeavoured to govern mildly.

The system of Philip the Second was, no doubt, the most violent specimen of harsh government that has yet been exhibited among mankind. But the system of all other mother countries has been similar; and what difference there may be is in degree, and not in kind.

A distinction is here to be made. Philip the Second has always been considered, and justly, as the most perfect example of bigotry that history supplies; and to this must be imputed much of the

abominable tyranny which he exercised over the Low Countries. But the love of arbitrary power is always found where bigotry is found. The human mind, amid its endless inconsistencies, is indeed capable of being animated with a love of religious liberty, and yet of being at the same time ignorant of the nature, or somewhat indifferent to the cause, of civil liberty. Instances of this kind, though very rare, have sometimes occurred, but the converse never has ; no man was ever a religious bigot, and at the same time a friend to civil liberty ; and it was perfectly consistent for Philip to introduce not only the Inquisition into the Low Countries, but also Spanish soldiers into the fortified towns ; to deprive the Flemings of the free exercise of their religious opinions, and at the same time of the laws and privileges of their states and assemblies ; to leave in ecclesiastical matters no visible head but the Pope, and in civil affairs no real authority but his own. These were parts of a system of conduct that perfectly harmonized with each other : each took its turn as the occasion required.

The favorite instruments of his tyranny were men of like nature with himself, — foes equally to civil and religious liberty, — Cardinal Granvelle and the Duke of Alva.

Bigotry and the love of rule had so conspired even in Charles the Fifth, his father, that he had paved the way, by his edicts, for all the subsequent proceedings of Philip, and was, perhaps, saved from similar enormities only by a partiality which he had contracted for Flanders in his early years, — those years when his mind was in its natural state, could be capable of attaching itself to the objects that surrounded it, and of tasting a happiness which it is probable no subsequent splendor could ever afterwards bestow.

The object contended for by Philip was, that the religious persuasion of these countries should be the same as his own. “ You may lose them, if you persist,” said one of his officers. “ I would rather be without kingdoms,” he replied, “ than enjoy them with heresy.”

Now, on all occasions when harsh government is to be the means, it will always be found, as in this instance, that, in the first place, the end to be accomplished is not worth the risk of the experiment, to say nothing of the injustice of the experiment itself.

Next, it will be found that some statesman like Cardinal Granvelle always makes his appearance : very violent and very able, — qualities not incompatible ; skilled in business, and perhaps acquainted with the inferior country that is to be ruled ; distinct, decisive, and consistent in his opinions ; whose counsels, therefore, have an air of wisdom which does not belong to them, and acquire irresistible authority in the superior or mother country, with the monarch and his cabinet, because they are not well informed themselves, and are already sufficiently disposed to such counsels from the prejudices of their own situation.



Again, the Roman Catholic historians are satisfied in imputing all the turbulence, as they would call it, of the Prince of Orange and the Flemish leaders to disappointed ambition. But it is always forgotten that such disappointment is reasonable. When authority and influence are generally conferred, not on the natives of the country governed, but on those who in comparison are considered as aliens, it is impossible that men should be satisfied with the government which robs them of their natural consequence in their own land. This is a very common species of impolicy and injustice. The Flemings, it will be found, had every reason to be dissatisfied in this respect.

Lastly, the student will observe, on the other side, great irregularities committed by the people in their mode of resistance to Philip: the symbols of the Roman Catholic worship insulted with great violence and outrage; and an intolerance displayed by *them*, precisely of the same nature with the intolerance of Philip himself.

Excesses of this kind always occur, and are instantly seized upon in argument, by those who govern, as justifying the harsh measures that in fact led the way to them; they are brought forward as demanding fresh applications of force and severity. But the very contrary of all this is the proper conclusion; it is the total inability of the people to govern for themselves, it is their inevitable fury, ignorance, and brutality, when once roused, that render mild government so indispensable a duty in their rulers. Their faults are a part of the very case; temper, moderation, reasonable views, it is ridiculous to expect from them; but in cabinets they may and ought to be found: if they are not found somewhere, what must be the consequence?

I would recommend you particularly to observe how the whole nature of a subject like this is brought before your view by the debate that you will find represented by Bentivoglio as taking place in the Spanish cabinet in the presence of Philip the Second. The Duke of Feria was the advocate for mild measures; the Duke of Alba for force. Their speeches are given. Strada also gives the debate, but puts much of the argumentation of Feria into the mouth of the Prince of Eboli, who is mentioned by Bentivoglio as seconding rather than leading the Duke of Feria. The Duke of Alba appears in each of the historians to have advised instant coercion. He was the Moloch, whose "sentence was for open war."

I must confess that I think this debate, which you will see best in Bentivoglio, very remarkable. It is to be observed, that the reasonings of the Spanish statesmen are, on this occasion, exactly the same with those of our own statesmen at the breaking out and during the continuance of the late American war. Nor was the event dissimilar. The good sense of the Duke of Feria was exerted with as little effect as was afterwards the philosophic eloquence of Mr. Burke.

The establishment of the republic of Holland was in one instance the consequence, and the independence of America in the other.

But reason and history are equally unavailing to teach the wisdom of temperate and healing counsels to a brave and prosperous people, as were the Spaniards in the first instance, and the English in the second. Such a people and their rulers inflame each other, and every thing is to be submitted to that irritable jealousy and high sense of national importance which their courage and their power so inevitably produce. It was in vain that Margaret of Parma had, in the mean time, very tolerably composed the troubles of the Netherlands. The imperious nature of Philip and his counsellors was to be gratified, the Flemings were to be taught what it was to resist authority, and Alva was to be despatched to enforce that obedience by arms, which it suited not, it seems, the dignity of the monarch to deserve by humanity and justice.

The nature of the Flemish grievances may be very clearly understood from Watson, and even from Bentivoglio. The Reformation had made some progress in the Netherlands. The prosperity of the people everywhere depended, not on any assistance from the Spanish monarchy, but on their own industry and commerce, — that is, on their equal laws and constitutional privileges. The edicts of Charles the Fifth had declared, that all persons who held heretical opinions should be deprived of their offices and degraded from their rank; that they who taught these doctrines, or were present at the religious meetings of heretics, should be put to death; that even those who did not inform of heretics should be subjected to the same penalties. Philip had resolved, first, to enforce these horrible edicts; secondly, to establish a tribunal that could not be distinguished, except in name, from that of the Inquisition; thirdly, to increase the number of bishops from five to seventeen. These were to be the ecclesiastical instruments of his power. The civil instruments of his authority were to be found in the numerous bands of Spanish soldiers which, fourthly, he resolved to station in the provinces, contrary to the provisions of their fundamental laws. It can be no matter of surprise that a system like this should be considered, by a people so situated, as a system of destruction.

The resistance of the Prince of Orange and of some of the Flemish nobles will be found, even according to the representation of Bentivoglio, to have been as temperate and regular as the calmest speculator could require; and the whole of the proceedings between them and the regent Margaret, and between both and the Spanish court, are very instructive. But when we come to the next part of the subject, the resistance that in fact was made, it must surely be a matter of great surprise to us to find that no general effort of this kind seems to have been made against the Duke of Alva, when he at length appeared. He came into the Low Countries, and, with an



army of about fourteen thousand men, he disposed of the lives and privileges of the Flemings of all ranks at his pleasure, imprisoned two of the most popular and meritorious noblemen, erected a Council of Tumults, or, as it was more properly called, a Council of Blood, and destroyed, in the course of a few months, by the hands of the executioner, more than one thousand eight hundred different individuals; while more than twenty thousand persons fled into France, Germany, and England, without the slightest attempt having first been made, either by themselves or others, for their common safety and protection.

These cruelties, and the cruelties that were inflicted by other persecutors who preceded Alva, may be seen in Brandt; and Bentivoglio himself observes, that even those who were nowise concerned were affrighted to see the faults of others so severely punished; and they groaned, he says, to perceive that Flanders, which was wont to enjoy one of the easiest governments in Europe, should now have no other object to behold but the terror of arms, flight of exiles, imprisonment and blood, death and confiscations.

The only resource of the Prince of Orange and the patriots seems to have been to raise forces in Germany from their own funds, and to call to their assistance the Protestant princes, the Count Palatine, the Duke of Würtemberg, the Landgrave of Hesse, and others. "The danger is common," says the Prince of Orange; "so should the cause be. The Spanish forces, once in Flanders, will be always ready to enter Germany; and you will have new faces, new customs, severe laws, more severely executed, heavy yokes upon your persons, and more heavy upon your consciences. I am held," said he, "to be the contriver of conspiracies; but what greater glory can there be than to maintain the liberty of a man's country, and to die rather than be enslaved?"

William and his brother led separate armies against the Duke of Alva, but were obliged, the one to fly, and the other to disband his troops. The want of the means to pay them proved equally fatal in different ways to the enterprises of each commander; and neither proper funds nor adequate assistance were supplied by the Flemings themselves. This is one instance among many, which it is melancholy to observe, of the difficulty with which the regular troops of an unprincipled tyrant can be resisted, or at least ever are resisted, by an insulted and oppressed people. The principal cities became sensibly thinner in population; whole villages and small towns were rendered almost desolate. Still no resistance, — that is, no resistance from the Flemings themselves.

But it fortunately happened that Alva was not only made more arbitrary and insolent by success, but he began himself to feel the same want of money for the payment of his troops, which had been so fatal to the Protestant leaders. Philip was supposed at the time

to possess all the wealth of the world, and he certainly did possess a large portion of the gold and silver of it; but it was now to be shown that ambition and harsh government could exhaust even Mexico and Peru. Alva found himself obliged to have recourse to taxation, and to require from the industry and wealth of the Flemings themselves that constant supply which all the mines and slaves of his master were insufficient to afford him.

And now for once it happened, that a total ignorance of the principles of political economy in the rulers was eventually favorable to the happiness of the people. The duke insisted, — 1st, upon one per cent. on all goods movable or immovable; 2dly, on an annual tax of twenty per cent. on all immovable goods or heritage; and, lastly, of ten per cent. on all movable goods, to be paid on every sale of them. Taxes better fitted, the former for the annoyance of a commercial people, and the latter for their destruction, could not well have been contrived. It was in vain that the Duke of Alva was told, that, if this ten per cent. was paid on every sale of an article, — first on the wool, for instance, then on the yarn, then on the cloth before it was dyed; then, when sold, first to the merchant, secondly to the retailer, and lastly to the consumer, — no foreign customer would be willing to buy it, and no home customer would be able; and that, on the whole, such a tax could produce only the ruin of the manufacture itself and all concerned, or, in other words, of all the sources of revenue together. Observations of this kind were sufficiently answered by Alva, as he thought, when he replied, with that stupidity as well as insolence which so generally belongs to arbitrary power, that the tax was levied in his town of Alva, and that he wanted the money.

It is not very agreeable to observe, that everywhere, through all history, the most sensible nerve that can be touched is this of taxation. Privileges may be taken away, laws violated, public assemblies discontinued; no *distant* consequence is regarded, no common principle seems as yet sufficiently outraged; the community are silent, or murmur only for a short season, and submit. But if a tax is to be levied, every man feels his interest at issue, every man starts up in arms, every man cries with Shylock, —

“Nay, take my life, and all; . . . .  
 . . . . You take my life,  
 When you do take the means whereby I live.”

Observe the facts in these Low Countries. The Flemings had seen their fellow-citizens executed by the Duke of Alva; had seen all the principles of their civil and religious liberty destroyed; had suffered the Prince of Orange and their patriot leaders to fight their battles by means of German Protestants, whom he was to pay in any manner he could devise, — a task to which it must have been known that his funds were totally unequal: all this they had seen,



and all this pusillanimous guilt they had incurred ; but the moment that the loss of their civil liberty was to produce *one* of its many injurious effects, the moment that the duke's tax-gatherers were to interfere with their manufactures and with the sources of their opulence, then, and not till then, combinations could be formed, a universal sensation take place, and resistance to the Spanish tyranny everywhere assume a visible form and become a regular system.

But our mortification is not yet to end. We might wish to see mankind always ready to kindle with a generous and rational sympathy. We might wish to see them act with some reasonable consistency and courage, when oppressed. But what was the fact ? The Walloon or southern provinces, being not so entirely commercial as those that were more maritime, will be found on that account (for no other reason can be given) to have resisted the taxes of Alva less firmly.

It is painful to follow the subject through all the more minute, but important, particulars that belong to it, and to observe the manner in which so many of the provinces could be practised upon and gained over, — could be soothed, deluded, or terrified, — could basely consent to submit to a certain part of the proposed requisitions, that is, to fit on such of the chains as they thought might possibly be borne, while the rest were to be left still hanging in the hands of their oppressors, ready to be applied on the first occasion, an occasion which they might be certain would so soon and so inevitably follow.

Had it not been for the resistance of Brabant, and the still more intelligent and invariable firmness of the single province of Utrecht, all might have been lost ; and the bigoted, unfeeling Philip, though his subjects might no longer have been worth his ruling, would at least have had the gratification of seeing them bound and prostrate at his feet. The example, however, of Utrecht was not without its effect, and its resistance was fatal to the Spanish system of taxation. A distinction, it is true, may always be perceived between the seven northern, more commercial provinces, and the rest. The more southern and less commercial often observed a cold neutrality, and were even guilty of a species of hostility to the Prince of Orange and the patriotic cause, that was often but too convenient and favorable to the Spanish arms.

Cruelty and oppression were, however, destined at last to receive some lessons. Holland, Zealand, and five other of the more bold and virtuous provinces of the Low Countries, which with Brabant must always be distinguished from the rest, openly and steadily resisted. It is consoling to observe, that even the exiles, men whom Alva had reduced, as he supposed, to the condition of mere outcasts and pirates, too contemptible to interest his thoughts for a moment, were in fact the very men who gave strength and animation to the

revolt; and by their armed vessels, their enterprises, their extraordinary exertions by sea as well as by land, so shook, and injured, and endangered the Spanish greatness, that the entire independence of a part at least of the Low Countries was at last formally asserted.

The military conduct of Alva is remarkable. In the field he was as calm and considerate as he was rash and intemperate in the cabinet; that is, he understood the science of war, but not of politics. Yet still he could not, even in arms, succeed. The opportunities for resistance afforded by the singular situation of the maritime provinces, the consummate prudence, the zeal, and the tolerant spirit of the Prince of Orange, were obstacles which he could not entirely overcome. The great towns in Holland, Haerlem and others, were besieged, taken, and outraged by the most extraordinary excesses of cruelty and rapine; but there were other towns that could not be taken. Holland, Zealand, and five other provinces, acknowledged the authority of the Prince of Orange, not of Philip; and Alva at last retired, though the rebellion in the Low Countries was not put down, and neither his own vengeance nor that of his master as yet satiated. He consoled himself, we are told, with the reflection, that eighteen thousand heretics had suffered by the hands of the executioner, and a much greater number fallen by famine or the sword.

It appears from this history, that concessions were made by the Spanish court; but, as is usual in such contests, made too late. Orders had been sent by Philip to remit the taxes of the ten and twenty per cent., but not till the maritime provinces had already revolted. After Alva, with his soldiers and executioners, had been let loose upon the provinces for nearly six years together, Philip began at last to doubt a little the efficacy of force, and to be disposed to send a new governor, in the person of Requesens, who might act on a more conciliating system. Requesens was a man of ability and moderation, and this last part of his character gave the Prince of Orange and the patriots the greatest apprehension, lest the Flemings should too readily forget the perfidy and cruelty of their oppressors. But Requesens not only came too late, but found it impossible to serve such a master as Philip.

I can, however, no longer continue this sort of narrative. After Requesens, followed a kind of interregnum, and the government of a Flemish council of state; then, the administration of Don John of Austria; lastly, that of the justly renowned Prince of Parma. Each of these administrations became an era in this great contest. Each has its particular events, and its own more striking, though not very dissimilar, lessons. I had drawn up observations on each of them. But I must omit all further allusion, not only to the facts of this contest, but to the contest itself. I must break away from the subject, for I must hasten to conclude my lecture. I am willing to hope that you will not only read the whole account in Watson, but



be prepared to make such observations on the events as they ought, I think, to excite in your minds. If I have succeeded to this extent, I am satisfied, and consider my office as at an end.

To advert, therefore, to the final result of this great struggle, and to finish my lecture.

The Prince of Orange, notwithstanding the defection of some, and the mutual jealousies of too many of the provinces, had contrived to form the Union of Utrecht, — a combination of seven of them; and this union may be considered as the first foundation of the republic of Holland.

It is difficult for unprincipled ambition to be prudent. Philip had not only schemes of tyranny in the Low Countries, but of invasion in England, and of aggrandizement in France. The multiplicity of his designs exhausted even his American treasures; the impossibility of his wishes squandered away even the resources of the genius of the Duke of Parma. The United Provinces were not subdued, England was not overcome, France was not united to his crown, and Europe was not subjected to the domination of the house of Austria.

We have at last the satisfaction to see the seven maritime provinces, at least, treating with their oppressors as sovereign states; and not only their independence admitted, but their trade with the Indies allowed, and their cause completely triumphant.

These events, and particularly the negotiations for peace, may be seen in Bentivoglio and Wraxall, and may be considered with still greater advantage in Watson. Transactions of this nature are very deserving of attention; and we cannot but be struck, not only with the active policy of Henry the Fourth of France, but with the virtuous exertions of the wise Barneveldt, who, more successful than other patriots who resembled him have sometimes been, had the pure satisfaction of reasoning into peace his inflamed and improvident countrymen.

In the whole of this memorable contest, — a contest of half a century, — the great hero was the Prince of Orange, the great delinquent was Philip the Second. The one may be proposed as a model, in public and in private, of every thing that is good and great; and the other, with the exception of attention to business, of every thing that is to be avoided and abhorred.

To Europe and mankind, in the mean time, the success of the maritime provinces was of the greatest importance. The power of the house of Austria was for ever prevented from gaining too dangerous an ascendancy. Resistance to those who were controlling religious opinions by fire and sword, and trampling upon constitutional privileges, had been successfully made. An asylum was opened for all those, of whatever country, who fled from persecution, — from persecution of whatever kind. The benefit thus accruing to mankind cannot now be properly estimated, for we cannot now feel what it is

to have no refuge and no means of resistance, while men are ready to punish us for our opinions, and are making themselves inquisitors of our conduct. It is known to have been one of the severest miseries of the later Romans, that they could not escape from their government, that the world belonged to their emperors. It was in the Low Countries that the defenders of civil and religious liberty found shelter. It was there that they could state their complaints, publish what they conceived to be the truth, and maintain and exercise the privileges of free inquiry. These were the countries to which Locke retired, and where William the Third was formed.

But this was not all. The wonders that can be effected by commerce and the peaceful arts were displayed, and, on the whole, a practical example was held up to the princes and statesmen of every age and nation, well fitted to teach them many of those great truths which every friend of humanity would wish always present to their minds: that ambition should be virtuous and peaceful, that religious feelings should be tolerant, that government should be mild.

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## LECTURE XIII.

### THE THIRTY YEARS' WAR.

WE have now made some progress in the history of this century of religious wars. We have considered the civil and religious wars of France; next, those of the Low Countries. We must now turn to Germany.

I have called this lecture a Lecture on the Thirty Years' War; but I should rather have called it a Lecture on the Religious Concerns of Germany. The Thirty Years' War is, indeed, the most interesting portion of the whole, and that to which the attention of all readers of history has been more naturally directed; but there is much to be read and considered before you reach the Thirty Years' War, and much after, or you will not be able to embrace in your minds the whole subject,—the subject of the religious concerns of Germany during the sixteenth century. In truth, I am to allude to such a mass of reading in this lecture, and allude to it so indistinctly, that I know not well how I can enable you to listen to what I am to address to you.

It may assist you, perhaps, if you will first attend to the order in which I am going to proceed. It is the following:—



The Reformation introduced great divisions of opinion into Germany. I must first allude to the contest that existed between the Catholics and Protestants, from the breaking out of the Reformation to the peace of Passau.

At this peace of Passau, the interests of the contending parties were brought to an adjustment. I must therefore next allude to the provisions of that peace of Passau.

But after some time this adjustment was no longer acquiesced in, and the Thirty Years' War followed. I must therefore allude to the causes which brought on the Thirty Years' War.

This Thirty Years' War is a memorable era in history, and I must therefore allude to the conduct of it, and to the great hero of the Protestant cause on this occasion, Gustavus Adolphus.

The peace of Westphalia was the termination of this great contest, and of the whole subject; and I must therefore allude, finally, to the peace of Westphalia.

The whole interval from the days of Luther to this peace of Westphalia, an interval of more than a century, must be considered as one continued struggle, open or concealed, between the Reformers and the Roman Catholics. The first period of this great contest extends to the peace of Passau; the next, to the Thirty Years' War; the Thirty Years' War is the third. The peace of Westphalia is the final settlement of the whole.

First, then, of the period that closed with the peace of Passau. I need neither, as I conceive, relate the facts, nor comment upon them, for you may study this part of the history yourselves in Robertson and Coxe, and it would be a waste of your time to offer you here, in a mutilated state, what you will find regularly displayed in those authors. I may, however, select what I consider as the leading events, and recommend you to fix your attention upon them. They are the following: —

First, The denial of the authority of the Pope by Luther.

Secondly, The total intolerance of Charles the Fifth, avowed in the edict of Worms.

Thirdly, The resistance of the Protestants, and the exhibition of their own faith in the Confession of Augsburg.

Fourthly, Their appeal to arms from the injustice of Charles, — the league of Smalkalden.

Lastly, After the various events of unrighteous warfare, the religious peace concluded at Passau, in 1555,\* about the close of his reign.

These are the principal events. You must consider them, particu-

\* The peace of Passau was concluded August 2, 1552. The date given in the text, 1555, is that of the Recess of Augsburg, by which the treaty of Passau was confirmed. It is to this Recess that the provisions noticed in the next page, particularly the "Ecclesiastical Reservation," and the "declaration securing liberty of conscience to those who adopted the Confession of Augsburg," are to be referred. See Robertson's Charles V., Books x., xi., and Coxe's House of Austria, Ch. xxxi. — N

larly the peace of Passau. On this last, as it is so important, I will stop to make a few observations.

It was the first great adjustment of the contending religious interests of Germany. It was extorted from Charles the Fifth, and, on the whole, it was favorable to the great cause of religious freedom and the welfare of mankind. Those of the inferior sect were no longer to be insulted, dispersed, or exterminated; they were to exist in society, as their Roman Catholic brethren, erect and independent; they were to worship their God in the manner they thought most agreeable to his word. Human authority in matters of religious faith was avowedly cast off by a large and respectable part of the Continent; and neither the magistrate nor the soldier was any longer to unsheathe the sword, to imprison, to massacre, or to drag to the stake.

In practice, therefore, some progress had been made, — some progress in practice, but little in the understandings or feelings of mankind. The parties abstained from mutual violence, because they were well balanced, and feared each other, — not because they discerned and acknowledged their mutual rights and duties. Not only were the Roman Catholics separated from the Protestants, but the Lutherans had separated themselves from the Zuinglians, afterwards called the Calvinists, and had endeavoured to stigmatize them with the name of Sacramentarians. That is, the Roman Catholics, the Lutherans, and Calvinists were all equally ready to believe that every religious opinion but their own was sinful, and therefore that their own, upon every principle of piety and reason, was at all events to be propagated, and every other repressed.

Again, we have already observed that one of the great difficulties on this subject must always be the disposal of property to the ecclesiastic: to which sect it is to be given by the state; to one, or to all, and upon what conditions. This difficulty necessarily appeared at the pacification which was attempted at Passau.

It was insisted by the Protestants, that all those who separated from the Church of Rome should, nevertheless, retain their ecclesiastical emoluments, — emoluments, it must be observed, which had been received originally from the Roman Catholic establishment. By the Roman Catholics it was contended, on the contrary, that every such separatist should immediately lose his benefice.

This point could not, at the peace of Passau, be carried by the Protestants. They seem to have sullenly submitted, and to have virtually acquiesced in what was called the Ecclesiastical Reservation. This reservation secured the benefice, and left it to remain with the Catholic establishment when the holder turned Protestant.

The Protestants were consoled, on the other hand, by a declaration securing liberty of conscience to those who adopted the Confession of Augsburg, — a declaration which the Roman Catholics as little relished as the Protestants did the reservation just mentioned.



The parties were, therefore, not as yet sufficiently religious and wise to settle the real subjects of contention. Then followed, after this peace of Passau, a sort of interval and pause. After this interval, all Germany was laid waste and convulsed by the Thirty Years' War.

We naturally turn to ask what were the causes of so dreadful an event, — thirty years' war; the very term is a disgrace to humanity. To this the answer will, I think, be found to be, first, the intolerant conduct of the Protestant princes to each other; second, the bigotry, ambition, and arbitrary politics of the princes of the house of Austria. I will say a word on each.

First, with regard to the conduct of the Protestant princes, Lutheran and Calvinistic. It will appear to those who examine the history, that the Protestant cause was well established at the peace of Passau, and at the death of Charles the Fifth; but that it was afterwards nearly lost by the advantages which the Roman Catholic arms and politics derived from the dissensions which existed between the Lutheran and Calvinistic princes. Though these princes had the most palpable bond of union (their wish to exercise the right of private judgment), — though they were both equally opposed to the Catholic powers who would have denied them this inestimable privilege, yet was it impossible for them to differ in some mysterious points of doctrine without a total disregard to mutual charity; and each sect, rather than suffer the other to think differently from itself, was contented to run the chance of being overpowered by the Catholics, that is, of not being suffered to think at all. The Lutherans might possibly have been expected to be the most rational, that is, the most tolerant of the two; but they were not so; they were, in reality, more in fault than the Calvinists, — being not only the first aggressors in this dispute with their fellow-Protestants, but the more ready to temporize, to betray and desert the common cause.

You will perceive that I am here obliged to leave great blanks behind me, as I go along, and you will perceive the same through every part of this lecture. These blanks must be hereafter filled up by your own diligence. I cannot expect to make the steps I take through my subject very intelligible at present; but you will be able to judge of my arrangement, my statements, and my conclusions hereafter, when you come to read the history.

I must, then, for the present, content myself with repeating to you, that the Protestant princes were themselves very faulty, more particularly the Lutheran princes; that their intolerance to each other was most unpardonable; and that the conduct of some of the electors of Saxony was very despicable, and most injurious to the Protestant cause; and, finally, that all this folly and intolerance led to the Thirty Years' War.

My next statement was, that the Thirty Years' War, and all its

dreadful scenes, were occasioned, in the second place, by the civil and religious politics, the bigoted and arbitrary conduct, of the princes of the house of Austria.

Here, again, large blanks must be left. You can judge of these politics only by reading the reigns of those princes. I must refer you to the pages of Mr. Coxe. I will make, however, a few remarks.

These princes were Ferdinand the First, Maximilian, Rodolph, Matthias, Ferdinand the Second. The character of Maximilian deserves your notice.

It is very agreeable to find among these Austrian princes one sovereign, at least, like Maximilian, whose conduct is marked by justice, wisdom, and benevolence, and whose administration realizes what an historian would propose as a model for all those who are called upon to direct the affairs of mankind. On this account I must observe, that there is no period connected with these religious wars that deserves more to be studied than these reigns of Ferdinand the First, Maximilian, and those of his successors who preceded the Thirty Years' War. We have no sovereign who exhibited that exercise of moderation and good sense which a philosopher would require, but Maximilian, and he was immediately followed by princes of a *different* complexion; and as all the various sects themselves were ready from the first to display at any moment those faults which belong to human nature, when engaged in religious concerns, the whole subject of toleration and mild government, its advantages and its dangers, and the advantages and dangers of an opposite system, are at once presented to our consideration; and the only observation that remains to be made is this: that the difficulties and the hazards of the harsh and unjust system are increased and exasperated by their natural progress, while those that belong to the mild system are to be expected chiefly at first; that they gradually disappear, and become less important, particularly as the world advances in civilization and knowledge, and as the thoughts of men are more diversified by the active pursuits and petty amusements which multiply with their growing prosperity.

Nothing could be more complete than the difficulty of toleration at the time when Maximilian reigned; and if a mild policy could be attended with favorable effects in his age and nation, there can be little fear of the experiment at any other period. No party or person in the state was then disposed to tolerate his neighbour from any sense of the justice of such forbearance, but from motives of temporal policy alone. The Lutherans, it will be seen, could not bear that the Calvinists should have the same religious privileges with themselves; the Calvinists were equally opinionated and unjust; and Maximilian himself was probably tolerant and wise chiefly because he was in his real opinions a Lutheran, and in outward profession, as the head of the Empire, a Roman Catholic.



For twelve years, the whole of his reign, he preserved the religious peace of the community, without destroying the religious freedom of the human mind. He supported the Roman Catholics, as the predominant party, in all their rights, possessions, and privileges ; but he protected the Protestants in every exercise of their religion which was then practicable. In other words, he was as tolerant and just as the temper of society then admitted, and more so than the state of things would have suggested. Now more than this no considerate Christian or real philosopher will require from the sovereign power at any time ; not more than to countenance toleration, to be disposed to experiments of toleration, and to lead on to toleration, if the community can but be persuaded to follow. More than this will not, I think, be required from the rulers of the world by any real philosopher and true Christian ; and this, not because the great cause of religious truth and inquiry is at all indifferent to them, (it must always be most dear to them,) but because they know that mankind on these subjects are profoundly ignorant and incurably irritable. The merit of Maximilian was but too apparent the moment that his son Rodolph was called upon to supply his place.

The tolerance and forbearance of Maximilian had been favorable, as it must always be, to the better cause ; but the Protestants, instead of being encouraged by the visible progress of their tenets, and thereby induced to leave them to the sure operation of time and the silent influence of truth, had broken out with all the stupid fury that often belongs to an inferior sect, and indulged themselves in the most public attacks and unqualified invectives against the Established Church. The gentle, but powerful, hand of Maximilian was now withdrawn ; and he had made one most fatal and unpardonable mistake : he had always left the education of his son and successor too much to the discretion of his bigoted consort. Rodolph, his son, was therefore as ignorant and furious, on his part, as were the Protestants on theirs ; he had immediate recourse to the usual expedients, — force, and the execution of the laws to the very letter. It is needless to add, that injuries and mistakes quickly multiplied as he proceeded ; and Maximilian himself, had he been recalled to life, would have found it difficult to extricate his unhappy sons and his unfortunate people from the accumulated calamities which it had been the great glory of his own reign so skilfully to avert.

After Rodolph comes Matthias, and, unhappily for all Europe, Bohemia and the Empire fell afterwards under the management of Ferdinand the Second. Of the different Austrian princes, it is the reign of Ferdinand the Second that is more particularly to be considered.

Such was the arbitrary nature of his government over his subjects in Bohemia, that they revolted. They elected for their king the young Elector Palatine, hoping thus to extricate themselves from the

bigotry and tyranny of Ferdinand. This crown, so offered, was accepted; and in the event, the cause of the Bohemians became the cause of the Reformation in Germany, and the Elector Palatine the hero of that cause. It is this which gives the great interest to this reign of Ferdinand the Second, to these concerns of his subjects in Bohemia, and to the character of this Elector Palatine; for all these events and circumstances led to the Thirty Years' War. I cannot here explain to you the particular circumstances which produced such unexpected effects as I have now stated, but you may study them in Coxe and other historians.

We thus arrive at the Thirty Years' War. I will, however, turn for a moment to this Elector Palatine. This is the prince who was connected with our own royal family. He was married to the daughter of our James the First.

You will see, even in our own historians, the great interest which the Protestant cause in Germany, to which I am obliged so indistinctly to allude, excited in England, as well as in all the rest of Europe.

The history of the Elector Palatine is very affecting; you will read it in Coxe. He accepted, you may remember, the crown which was offered to him by the Bohemians; he was unworthy of it; he accepted it in an evil hour.

It must be confessed that the difficulties of those in exalted station are peculiarly great. It is the condition of their existence, that the happiness of others shall depend on them,—shall depend not only on the high qualities of their nature, their generosity, their courage, but on the endowments of their minds, their prudence, their foresight, their correct judgment, their accurate estimates, not only of others, but of themselves. So unfortunately are they situated, that their ambition may be even generous and noble, and yet their characters be at last justly marked with the censure of mankind.

The Elector Palatine, by accepting the crown of Bohemia, became, as I have just observed, under the existing circumstances of Germany, the chief of the Protestant cause; but he undertook a cause so important, and he suffered the lives and liberties of thousands to depend on his firmness and ability, without ever having properly examined his own character, or considered to what situations of difficulty his powers were equal. When, therefore, the hour of trial came, when he was weighed in the balance, he was found wanting, and his kingdom was divided from him. Had he himself been alone interested in his success, his subsequent sufferings might have atoned for his fault; but the kingdom of Bohemia was lost to its inhabitants, the Palatinate to its own subjects, and the great cause of religious inquiry and truth might also have perished in the general wreck of his fortunes.

But in the reign of the same Ferdinand the Second, there arose,



in the same cause in which the Elector Palatine had failed, a hero of another cast, — Gustavus Adolphus.

And now to recapitulate a little, that you may see the connecting links of this part of the subject, in which I am obliged to leave such blanks. You will have understood in a general manner, and I must now remind you, that the house of Austria was the terror of the Protestants of Germany; that Ferdinand the Second oppressed by his tyranny and bigotry his Protestant subjects, more particularly in Bohemia; that their cause became the cause of the Protestant interest in Germany; that the Elector Palatine was the first hero of this great cause, and that he failed; that the illustrious Swede was the second, and that he deserved the high office which he bore, — that he deserved to be the defender of the civil and religious liberties of Europe, and that he was the great object of admiration in the Thirty Years' War.

Of this Thirty Years' War it is not at all necessary that I should speak here, even if I had time, which I have not, because the particulars are so interesting, that I can depend upon your reading them. You will do so, I beg to assure you, with great pleasure, if you once turn to them. The narrative and detail you will find in Coxe.

The campaigns of Gustavus, his victories, his death, — the campaigns of the generals he left behind, — the campaigns of the Austrian generals, the celebrated Tilly, the still more celebrated Wallenstein, — particulars respecting these subjects, and many others highly attractive, you will find in Coxe and in Harte, and to these authors I must leave you. I will make, however, a few remarks, and first of Gustavus.

As it must needs be that offences will come, as violence and injustice can be repelled only by force, as mankind must and will have their destroyers, it is fortunate when the high courage and activity of which the human character is capable are tempered with a sense of justice, wisdom, and benevolence, — when he who leads thousands to the field has sensibility enough to feel the nature of his awful office, and wisdom enough to take care that he directs against its proper objects the afflicting storm of human devastation. It is not always that they who have commanded the admiration of mankind have claims like these to their applause. Courage and sagacity can dignify any man, whatever be his cause; they can ennoble a wretch like Tilly, while he fights the battles of a Ferdinand. It is not always that these great endowments are so united with other high qualities as to present to the historian at once a Christian, a soldier, and a statesman; yet such was Gustavus Adolphus, a hero deserving the name, perfectly distinguishable from those who have assumed the honors that belong to it, the military executioners with whom every age has been infested.

The life of this extraordinary man has been written by Mr. Harte, with great activity of research, and a scrupulous examination of his materials, which are understood to be the best, though they are not sufficiently particularized. The book will disappoint the reader: Mr. Harte writes often with singularly bad taste, and never with any masterly display of his subject; but it may be compared with Coxe, and must be considered.

The great question which it is necessary for the fame of Gustavus should be settled in his favor is the invasion of Germany. Sweden, the country of which he was king, could, at the time, furnish for the enterprise only her two great products, "iron and man, the soldier and his sword"; and with these, a leader like Gustavus, some centuries before, might have disposed of Europe at his pleasure; but, happily for mankind, the invention of gunpowder and the progress of science had made war a question, not merely of physical force, but of expense. The surplus produce of the land and labor of the snowy regions of Sweden was little fitted to support a large military establishment either at home or abroad, little fitted to contend with the resources of the house of Austria. It was, therefore, very natural for the counsellors of Gustavus to represent strongly to their sovereign the expenses of a war on the Continent, the great power of the emperor, and the reasonableness of supposing that the German electors were themselves the best judges of the affairs of the Empire, and the best able to vindicate their own civil and religious liberties.

But it was clear, on the other hand, that the power of the house of Austria, which had already distantly menaced, might soon be enabled to oppress, the civil and religious liberties of Sweden; it was impossible to separate the interests of that kingdom from those of the Protestant princes of Germany; and therefore the only question that remained was, whether Gustavus should come forward as a leader of the combination against Ferdinand the Second, or wait to be called in, and join the general cause as an auxiliary.

Now the prince who was naturally the head of the Protestant union was the Elector of Saxony, a prince whose politics and conduct at the time could awaken, in the minds of good men, only contempt and abhorrence. If, therefore, no one interfered, and that immediately, all was lost; and the very want of a principal, and the very hopelessness of the Protestant cause, must have been the very arguments that weighed most with a prince like Gustavus, and were, indeed, the very arguments that would have influenced an impartial reasoner, at the time, in favor of this great attempt, provided the abilities of Gustavus were clearly of a commanding nature.

On this last supposition, it must also be allowed that the case, when examined, supplied many important probabilities to coun-



tenance the enterprise. Speculations of this kind you should indulge as much as possible, while you are engaged in historical pursuits ; it is the difference between reading history and studying it.

After all, it is often for genius to justify its own projects by their execution ; and such may, if necessary, be the defence of Gustavus.

If any war can be generous and just, it is that waged by a combination of smaller states against a greater in defence of their civil and religious liberty. Such was the contest in which Gustavus was to engage. Nothing, therefore, could be wanting to him but success. He won it by his virtues and capacity, and his name has been justly consecrated in the history of mankind.

It sometimes happens, that, when the master hand is removed, the machine stops, or its movements run into incurable disorder ; but Gustavus was greater than great men : when Gustavus perished, his cause did not perish with him. The mortal part of the hero lay covered with honorable wounds and breathless in the plains of Lützen ; but his genius still lived in the perfect soldiers he had created, the great generals he had formed, the wise minister he had employed, and the senate and people of Sweden, whom he had elevated to his own high sense of honor and duty. Neither his generals, his soldiers, his minister, nor his people, were found so unworthy of their sovereign as to be daunted by his loss, and they were not to be deterred from the prosecution of the great cause which he had bequeathed them. The result was, that sixteen years afterwards, at the peace of Westphalia, Sweden was a leading power in the general settlement of the interests of Europe ; and if Gustavus had yet lived, he would have seen the very ground on which he first landed, with only fourteen thousand men to oppose the numerous and regular armies of the house of Austria, publicly ceded to his crown, the power of that tyrannical and bigoted family confessedly humbled, and the independence and religion of his own kingdom sufficiently provided for in the emancipation and safety of the Protestant princes of Germany.

In considering the reign and merits of Gustavus, our attention may be properly directed to the following points : — the invasion of Germany, the improvements which the king made in the military art, the means whereby he could support his armies, the causes of his success, his conduct after the victory of Leipsic, his management of men and of the circumstances of his situation, his private virtues and public merits, his tolerance, and the nature of his ambition, — how far it was altered by his victories, — the service he rendered Europe. Much assistance is contained, rather than presented to the reader, in the work of Harte.

The history of the Thirty Years' War has been written by Schiller ; and when this era has been considered in the more simple and

regular historians, the performance of this celebrated writer may be perused, not only with great entertainment, but with some advantage. Indeed, any work by Schiller must naturally claim our perusal ; but neither is his account so intelligible nor are his opinions so just as those of our own historian, Coxe.

The extraordinary character of Wallenstein — the great general who could alone be opposed by Ferdinand to Gustavus — was sure to catch the fancy of a German dramatist like Schiller. Here, for once, were realized all the darling images of the scene : mystery without any possible solution ; energy more than human, magnificence without bounds, distinguished capacity ; gloom, silence, and terror ; injuries and indignation ; nothing ordinary, nothing rational ; and at last, probably a conspiracy, and, at least, an assassination.

The campaigns of Gustavus, and the military part of his history, will be found more than usually interesting. Coxe has labored this portion of the narrative with great diligence, and, as he evidently thinks, with great success.

We are now arrived at the conclusion of our subject, and I have been obliged to refer to such large masses of historical reading, and must have left so many spaces unoccupied in the minds of my hearers, that I think it best to stop and recall to your observation the steps of our progress, and advert to the leading points.

The whole of our present subject, then, should, I think, be separated into the following great divisions : — First, we are to examine the contest between the Roman Catholics and the Reformers, from the breaking out of the Reformation to the peace of Passau. Then, the provisions of that peace. Next, the causes of the Thirty Years' War, — which were, first, the conduct of the Protestant states and princes, Lutheran and Calvinistic, from the death of Charles the Fifth, and their impolitic and fatal intolerance of each other ; secondly, the conduct of the princes of the house of Austria, Ferdinand the First, Maximilian, Rodolph, Matthias, and Ferdinand the Second, more particularly their intolerance to their subjects in Bohemia and Hungary. Then, the peculiar circumstances in consequence of which the cause of the Bohemians and the oppressed subjects of the house of Austria became at length the cause of the Reformation in Germany, and the Elector Palatine the hero of it. Next, the misfortunes of that prince. Then, the interference and character of the renowned Gustavus Adolphus, the great and efficient hero of that cause, and of the Thirty Years' War, at which we thus arrive. Then, the campaigns between him and the celebrated generals (Tilly and others) employed by the Austrian family, which form a new point of interest. Again, the continuance of the contest after his death, under the generals and soldiers he had formed, which becomes another. And in this manner we are conducted to the settlement of the civil and religious differences of Germany by the treaty of West-



phalia, more than one hundred years after the first appearance of Luther, which treaty is thus left as the remaining object of our curiosity and examination, for it is the termination of the whole subject.

This celebrated treaty has always been the study of those who wish to understand the history of Europe, and the different views and systems of its component powers and states. There are references in Coxe sufficient to direct the inquiries of those who are desirous of examining it. But during the late calamities of Europe, after being an object of the greatest attention for a century and a half, it has shared the fate of every thing human; it has passed through its appointed period of existence, and is now no more. As a great record, however, in the history of Europe, — as a great specimen of what human nature is, when acting amid its larger and more important concerns, it must ever remain a subject of interest to the politician and philosopher. This treaty was the final adjustment of the civil and religious disputes of a century.

In examining the treaty of Westphalia, the first inquiry is with respect to its ecclesiastical provisions.

After the Reformation had once begun, the first effort of the Protestants was to put themselves into a state of respect, and to get themselves acknowledged by the laws of the Empire. In this they succeeded at the peace of Passau.

But the Ecclesiastical Reservation, as I have before mentioned, had then ordained, that, if a Roman Catholic turned Protestant, his benefice should be lost to him. Truth, therefore, had no equal chance; a serious impediment was thrown in the way, not only of conviction, but of all avowal of conviction, and even of all religious inquiry. For with what candor, with what ardor, was any ecclesiastic to inquire, when the result of his inquiry might be, that he would have to lose, not only his situation in society, but his accustomed means of subsistence? This point, however, could never be carried by the Protestants.

The Roman Catholics considered the Reservation as the bulwark of their faith, and found no difficulty in persuading the people, and more particularly the rulers of the people, that their cause was the cause of all true religion and good government. At the peace of Westphalia, therefore, it was agreed, that, if a Catholic turned Protestant, he should lose his benefice as before, and the same if a Protestant turned Catholic. But it will be observed, that to make the last provision was, in fact, to do nothing; for the Protestant was the invading sect. There was no chance of the Protestant's turning Roman Catholic, and the only question of practical importance was, whether the Catholic might be allowed to open his eyes, and, if he thought good, turn Protestant, without suffering in his fortunes; this he could not. The eyes of the Protestant were already opened.

The great cause, therefore, of religious inquiry at least (there was,

no doubt, a great difficulty in the case) failed, — but not entirely. For the inroads that the Protestants had made on the Catholic ecclesiastical property, during the first century of the Reformation, down, for instance, to the year 1624, were not inconsiderable; and in the possessions which they had thus obtained they were not to be disturbed. A certain progress, — an important progress, — was therefore made and secured.

Again, what is very remarkable, the civil rights of the Protestants, their equality with their Catholic brethren on all public occasions, in the Diet and other tribunals, were allowed. This was an important victory; far more than inferior sects have always been able to obtain, — more than they have obtained, for instance, in our own country; far more than can be accounted for by any influence which moderation and good sense could have had upon the contending parties.

Another result took place: the Calvinists and Lutherans contrived at last to consider themselves as one body, whose business it was, during the negotiations of the peace and ever after, to provide for their common security, while equally resisting the authority of the Church of Rome. This, too, was an important victory, — a victory which the two sects obtained, not over their enemies, but over themselves; partly in consequence of their past sufferings; still more from the influence of their own worldly politics; above all, from the master interference of France, whose ministers, equally disregarding the distinctions between Lutheran and Calvinist, and the cause of Protestant and Papist, wished only to subdue the house of Austria, and to combine and manage every party so as to produce this grand effect, the object of all their politics, — the humiliation of the house of Austria.

The future progress of religious truth seems to have been but loosely provided for. A prince was allowed to change or reform the religion of his dominions in all cases not limited by the treaty or settled by antecedent compact with the subject. The truth is, that a question like this last was too delicate to be adjusted by any formal ordinance in an age of religious wars, or indeed in any age.

The general principle adopted by the treaty seems to have been, to confirm every thing in the state in which it was left by the year 1624, — an arrangement that must, on the whole, be considered favorable to the Protestants, far more so than could have been expected, if we reflect on their own unfortunate intolerance of each other, and the difficulty, at all times, of sustaining a combination of smaller powers against a greater.

The great gainer in this contest was France; the great sufferer, the house of Austria. The grandeur of the one was advanced, and the ambition of the other was ever humbled. A combination against the house of Austria had been long carried on with more or less



regularity and effect, but chiefly by the influence of France. The result of this united effort was seen in the peace of Westphalia.

It is painful to think that the establishment of the civil and religious liberties of Germany was owing, not to the generous, rational, steady resistance of the Protestant princes, but much more to the anxiety of France to depress the house of Austria; and again, to the check which that house of Austria continually experienced to its designs, and was still likely to experience, from the arms of the Ottoman princes. In this manner it happened, that, for the religious part of the great treaty of Westphalia, for such toleration, good sense, and Christianity as are to be found there, mankind were, after all, indebted principally to such strange propagators of the cause of truth and free inquiry as Richelieu and the Mahometans.

By the treaty of Westphalia, the apprehensions which Europe had so long entertained of the power of the house of Austria were, as I have just mentioned to you, removed. But it is the great misfortune of mankind, that the balance is no sooner restored by the diminishing of one exorbitant power than it is again in danger by the preponderancy of another. From this epoch of the peace of Westphalia, the real power to be dreaded was no longer the house of Austria, but France; and the ambition of her cabinets, the compactness of her possessions, the extent of her resources, and the genius of her people soon converted into the enemy of the happiness of the world that very nation which at the peace of Westphalia appeared, and but *appeared*, in the honorable character of the protectress of the civil and religious liberties of Germany, and the mediatrix of the dissensions of a century.

In the Empire, the different states and princes were now more protected than before from the emperor, but they were not harmonized into a whole, nor was it possible that a number of petty sovereigns should be influenced by any general principle. It was impossible that they should either form themselves into any limited monarchy, or fall into any system, which, however it might have advanced the substantial greatness of all, would have diminished the personal splendor and fancied importance of each individual potentate. They therefore continued in their common form of union and law, and endeavoured to maintain the independence of the several princes and states by a league for their common interest; but this league could not possibly be made sufficiently binding and effective to secure that common interest, while they were exposed to the practices of foreign intrigue, not only from their situation, but from the improvident selfishness which belongs as well to states as to individuals. Thus it happened, that France, or any other power, found it easy at all times to convert a portion of the strength of Germany to its own purposes. Thus it happened that this immense division of the most civilized portion of the world never rose to that external consequence, and what

is more, never to that state of internal improvement and happiness, which, under favorable circumstances, it might certainly have realized.

I must now make two general observations, and conclude : first, on the house of Austria ; secondly, on the peace of Westphalia.

There is no pleasure in reading the history of these princes of the house of Austria. At the most critical period of the world they were the greatest impediments to its improvement ; every resistance possible was made to the Reformation by Charles the Fifth. Philip the Second is proverbial for his tyranny and bigotry. If we turn from the Spanish to the German line of this house, we see nothing, except in one instance (that of Maximilian), but the most blind and unfeeling hostility to the civil and religious rights of mankind. In this line are numbered Ferdinand the First, Maximilian, Rodolph, Matthias. Ferdinand the First we see always employed in tyrannizing over his kingdoms of Hungary and Bohemia. In his measures we can discern only the most continued violation of every principle which should animate a legislator. Instead of rational attempts to train up the bold privileges of a rude people into some political system, properly modified and adapted to the dispensation of more secure and practical freedom, we see force and fury, and command and authority, and all the machinery of harsh and arbitrary government, drawn out and employed to harass, subjugate, and destroy a spirited people, — a people that deserved a better fate, by no means incapable of attachment to their rulers, and perfectly susceptible of a sincere and ardent devotion to their Creator.

Was there any worldly policy in such outrages and injustice ? Instead of affectionate and zealous subjects, to be interposed between the dearest possessions of the house of Austria and the Turks, men were to be seen ever ready only to break out into insurrection (mutinous chiefs), rebels to the power of the crown, candidates for the crown itself, — men who were the sources of terror and embarrassment to the Empire, not its defenders, or the guardians of the general security and repose.

Nothing better can be said of Rodolph the Second and Matthias ; and Ferdinand the Second, under whom the Thirty Years' War broke out, was, as nearly as human bigotry and tyranny would admit, the very counterpart of Philip the Second of Spain. Men like these should be pointed out in history to statesmen and to sovereigns, as examples of all that they should in their public capacities avoid, not imitate. And this lesson is the more important, because these princes were not only men of princely virtues, of elevation of mind in adversity, of patience and of fortitude, and of great attention to business, but men of very sincere, though mistaken, piety ; Ferdinand the Second, more particularly, while his public conduct exhibited the most unprincipled lust of power and the most unfeeling



bigotry, was in private life the best of fathers, of husbands, and of masters; and whenever the religion of mercy was not concerned, was merciful and forgiving.

My second observation is connected with the treaty of Westphalia, and relates to the general condition and progress of the religious and political happiness of mankind. What is the history of that religious and political happiness, the history as here presented to us, in this final adjustment by the peace of Westphalia? Consider it.

A spirit of religious inquiry had been excited in a monk of Wittenberg; and so prepared had been mankind at the time, that this spirit had passed from his closet and solitary thoughts into the cabinets and the councils, the mind and the feelings, of Europe. What, then, was at last the result? What were the provisions of the treaty of Westphalia? Did not the cause of reason and of truth everywhere prevail, and was not a new profession of religious faith everywhere the consequence? Not so.

Again, a great family had arisen in Europe, arbitrary and ambitious, — the family of the house of Austria. Did not all the states and powers whose interests could be affected instantly unite in a common cause, and, without difficulty, restrain and diminish the power of this universal enemy? Not exactly so; not with such readiness, not with such ease.

Again, the whole regions of Germany were parcelled out among a number of cities and states, of princes and powers, ecclesiastical and secular. Did not the different parts and members of a system so unfitted for mutual advancement and strength coalesce into some general form, some great limited monarchy, which might have protected the whole, not only from themselves, but from the great monarchies of France and Spain on the one side, and the Turkish arms on the other? Not so.

In answer to all such inquiries, it must be confessed that the affairs of mankind cannot be made to run in these regular channels, or their jarring interests and prejudices be moulded into the convenient and beautiful forms which a philosophic mind might readily propose. Some effort, some approximation to a reasonable conduct in mankind, is generally visible; a struggle between light and darkness; from time to time an amelioration, an improvement, — at the period of the Reformation, for instance, — no doubt, an advance most distinct and important; the seeds of human prosperity, after each renovation of the soil, somewhat more plentifully scattered; the harvests continually less and less overpowered by the tares. All this is discernible as we journey down the great tract of history, and more than this is perhaps but seldom to be perceived.

But what, then, is the practical conclusion from the whole? That the virtue of those men is only the greater, who, in the midst of difficulty and discouragement, labor much, though they have been

taught by reading, reflection, and perhaps experience, to expect but little; who, whatever may be the failures of themselves or others in their endeavours to serve their fellow-creatures, are neither depressed into torpor, nor exasperated into misanthropy; who take care to deserve success, but who do not think that success is necessary to their merit; who fix their eyes steadily on the point of duty, and never cease, according to the measure of the talents with which they are intrusted by their Creator, to unite their efforts and embark their strength in the great and constant cause of wise and good men, the advancement of the knowledge and the virtue, that is, in other words, of the happiness, of their species.

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## LECTURE XIV.

HENRY THE EIGHTH.—ELIZABETH.—JAMES THE FIRST.—CHARLES THE FIRST.

WE must now turn to England. During the reign of a prince so respected for his courage and understanding, and so tyrannical in his nature, as Henry the Eighth, in the interval between the decline of the aristocracy and the rise of the commons, the constitution of England seems to have been exposed to the most extreme danger; and if Henry had lived longer, or if his successor had resembled him in capacity and disposition, this island, like France, might have lost its liberties for ever.

It appears that the slavish submission of Parliaments had proceeded, at length, to allow to the proclamations of the king an authority which, notwithstanding the remarkable limitations annexed to it, might eventually have been extended, in practice, to the destruction of all other authority in the realm. It is true that this act was not obtained till the thirty-first of his reign, and within a few years of his death; but in about ten years after his accession, it appears from Lord Herbert, who wrote a life of him, that he had "caused a general muster or description to be made of all his kingdom; commanding that they should certify, &c., the yearly value of every man's land; as also the stock on the lands, and who was owner thereof, &c.; also the value and substance of every person being above sixteen years old." (Herbert, p. 122, ann. 1522.) In consequence whereof he demanded a loan, &c., from his subjects, not fresh supplies from the Commons; so that the intentions of the king and his Council were sufficiently clear.



But there can be no stronger testimony to the right of the houses of Parliament to tax, or rather to concur in the taxation of the people, than the result of the utmost efforts of the king and Cardinal Wolsey to obtain money without their sanction. "All which extraordinary ways of furnishing the present necessities," says the historian, "yet ended in a Parliament the next year."\* In this next year, it seems, the cardinal himself personally interfered in the House of Commons, and the particulars are very curious. On the whole, the king, as it afterwards appeared, could direct and limit the Reformation at his will, — could manage at his pleasure the morality and religion of the commons, but not their property.

In 1525, an attempt was made once more to raise money without Parliament. But the people showed the spirit of Englishmen; for, while they pleaded their own poverty, they alleged, in the first place, "that these commissions were against the law" (Herbert, p. 162); and the king at last disavowed the whole proceedings, "and by letters," says the historian, "sent through all the counties of England, declared he would have nothing of them but by way of benevolence." Even with respect to the benevolence, the narrative, as given by Herbert, is curious; still more so, when a benevolence was again tried, and again clearly resisted, in 1544. Opposition was constantly made, though the judges authorized this expedient in the former instance, and though, in the latter, Read, a magistrate of the city, who refused compliance, was, by a great outrage, sent to serve in the wars against the Scots, and treated in a manner perfectly atrocious. It always appears that it was necessary to have recourse to Parliament, and the king in his last words, though the most decided and detestable of tyrants, "thanked them, because they had, freely of their own minds, granted to him a certain subsidy." Slavish, therefore, and base as these Parliaments were, the members of them did not entirely forfeit the character of Englishmen.

With respect, however, to the great point of the very existence of our legislative assemblies, it is to be observed, that, from the violent, cruel, and unprincipled measures into which Henry was so repeatedly hurried, he had continually to apply to his Parliaments, which kept up the use of them at this most critical era in our constitution. In France, on the contrary, Francis the First could always contrive to do without his national assemblies; a circumstance which most

\* In the previous editions of these Lectures, both English and American, the passage here quoted stands as follows: — "All which extraordinary ways of *finishing* the present *usurpations* ended in a Parliament the next year." We may unhesitatingly affirm that Professor Smyth could not have consciously substituted expressions of so widely different import from the original, — if, indeed, the sentence as altered can be said to have any intelligible meaning. That he in fact wrote as in the text, and that the alteration was purely an error of the press, we can hardly doubt, when we consider the manuscript form of the words here changed, and the ambiguous appearance which they might easily have assumed in cursory writing. — N.

unhappily, and most materially, contributed to their decline and fall.

In England, on the death of Henry, the real nature of the constitution was immediately shown. The very first years of the minority of his son, Edward the Sixth, produced repeals of those acts which had violated the acknowledged liberties of the country. But a bad minister could so impose upon the excellent nature even of Edward the Sixth, as to cause him to issue, at the close of his reign, a proclamation intended to influence the election of members of Parliament; a precedent which was sure to be followed by such a princess as Mary, and afterwards, though probably with less ill intention, by James the First. So innumerable are the perils to which the liberties of the subject are always exposed.

I hasten to the reign of Elizabeth. "In order to understand," says Mr. Hume, "the ancient constitution of England, there is not a period which deserves more to be studied than the reign of Elizabeth." And it happens, that there can be no period of our history which may be more thoroughly studied. Camden has written her life. There are very valuable collections of letters and papers; you may trace them in the references of Hume and Rapin; and many curious and amusing, and sometimes important, particulars have been lately drawn from these sources and presented to the ordinary reader in a very agreeable and sensible manner by Miss Aikin, in her *Memoirs of the Reign of Queen Elizabeth*. It is, however, the constitutional part of this history alone that I can myself allude to.

Hume, after making the remark I have alluded to, proceeds to state the very arbitrary nature of the constitution, as exhibited in the conduct and maxims of that queen, and of the ministers at that time. On the whole, he makes out a strong case to show the existence of such tribunals, such principles, and such practices, as seem in themselves totally inconsistent with all civil freedom, however qualified the idea which we should affix to the term.

But this reign, it must on the other hand be remembered, not only exhibits (as Hume endeavours to prove) the strength and extent of the royal prerogative, but also unveils and shows, though at a distance, all those more popular principles which equally belonged to the constitution of England, and all those reasonings and maxims, and even parties and descriptions of patriotism, which grew up afterwards into such visible strength and form, during the reigns of her successors, James and Charles. For instance, and to illustrate both views of the constitution, — the arbitrary and the popular nature of it, — whatever concerned the royal prerogative was considered by Elizabeth as forbidden ground, and she included within this description, in a religious age, every thing that related to the management of religion, to her particular courts, and to the succession to the



crown; she insisted, in her own words, "that no bills touching matters of state, or reformation in causes ecclesiastical, be exhibited." (Cobbett, p. 889.)

This will give you some idea of Hume's view of the reign, and of the arbitrary nature of it; and certainly it is quite disgusting to observe the slavish submission of some of the greatest men that our country has produced to the authority and caprices of this female sovereign, — the manner in which they became her knights, rather than her statesmen, — and the sort of scuffle which the court exhibited, between men of the first capacities and highest qualities, for mere patronage and power, rather than for any worthier objects connected with the civil and religious liberties of their country and of mankind. But, on the other hand, and in opposition to the views of Hume, it must be remarked, that, from the nature of Elizabeth's pretensions and claims, such as I have just alluded to, it certainly did happen that the members of the Commons did often offend her by their words, and were sometimes brought into direct collision with her supposed authority by the measures they proposed, — that a real struggle ensued, and that Elizabeth, with becoming wisdom, generally gave way.

On the whole, all the particulars that make up the constitutional history of this reign cannot, in a lecture like this, be even alluded to; nor is it possible that any one can acquire, by any other means than the perusal of the history, that general impression which the whole conveys. I have, therefore, no expedient left, but to endeavour to give some specimen of the whole subject, and this I will, therefore, now attempt to do.

I select for that purpose the speech and the examination of Peter Wentworth (there were two of them), and the more so, because you would not, unless you read the Parliamentary proceedings, sufficiently notice these singular transactions. Peter Wentworth was a Puritan; this is another reason why I should draw your attention to them. You should learn to understand the character of the Puritan as soon as possible; you must never lose sight of it, while reading this particular portion of our history. Wentworth was one of the most intrepid and able assertors of the privileges of the House, and being, as I have just said, a Puritan, he was irresistibly hurried forward, not only by a regard for the liberties of the subject, but by religious zeal. Here, therefore, in Wentworth, we have immediately presented to us a forerunner of the Hampdens and Pym, and in Elizabeth of Charles, the great actors that are to appear in the ensuing scenes; and there is little or no difference in the constitutional points at issue. Observe, then, what passed.

Elizabeth, after stopping and controlling the debates and jurisdiction of the House on different occasions, at last commissioned the Speaker to declare, in consequence of a bill relating to rites and

ceremonies in the Church having been read three times, that it was the queen's pleasure, "that, from henceforth, no bills concerning religion should be preferred or received into this House, unless the same should be first considered and approved by the clergy."

Wentworth, and indeed other members, had on former occasions not been wanting to the duty which they owed their country; but this interference of the queen produced from him, some time afterwards, a speech which has not been overlooked by Hume, and is in every respect memorable. Far from acquiescing in the ideas which Elizabeth had formed of the prerogative of the prince, and of the duties and privileges of the Parliament, expressions like the following are to be found in his harangue. You will observe the mixture of religious and patriotic feelings. "We are assembled to make, or abrogate, such laws as may be to the chiefest surety, safe-keeping, and enrichment of this noble realm of England. . . . I do think it expedient to open the commodities [advantages] that grow to the prince and whole state by free speech used in this place." This he proceeded to do on seven different grounds; and he concluded,— "That in this house, which is termed a place of free speech, there is nothing so necessary for the preservation of the prince and state as free speech; and without this, it is a scorn and mockery to call it a Parliament house, for, in truth, it is none, but a very school of flattery and dissimulation, and so a fit place to serve the Devil and his angels in, and not to glorify God and benefit the commonwealth." And again:—"So that to avoid everlasting death, and condemnation with the high and mighty God, we ought to proceed in every cause according to the matter, and not according to the prince's mind. . . . The king ought not to be under man, but under God and under the law, because the law maketh him a king; let the king, therefore, attribute that to the law which the law attributeth unto him,—that is, dominion and power: for he is not a king in whom will, and not the law, doth rule, and therefore he ought to be under the law." And again:—"We received a message, that we should not deal in any matters of religion, but first to receive from the bishops. Surely this was a doleful message; for it was as much as to say, 'Sirs, ye shall not deal in God's causes; no, ye shall in no wise seek to advance his glory.' . . . We are incorporated into this place to serve God and all England, and not to be timeservers, as humor-feeders, as cancers that would pierce the bone, or as flatterers that would fain beguile all the world, and so worthy to be condemned both of God and man. . . . God grant that we may sharply and boldly reprove God's enemies, our prince's and state; and so shall every one of us discharge our duties in this our high office wherein he hath placed us, and show ourselves haters of evil and cleavers to that that is good, to the setting forth of God's glory and honor, and to the preservation of our noble queen and commonwealth."



The speech is not short, and he goes on to conclude thus: — “Thus I have holden you long with my rude speech; the which since it tendeth wholly, with pure conscience, to seek the advancement of God’s glory, our honorable sovereign’s safety, and to the sure defence of this noble isle of England, and all by maintaining of the liberties of this honorable council, the fountain from whence all these do spring, my humble and hearty suit unto you all is, to accept my good-will, and that this, that I have here spoken out of conscience and great zeal unto my prince and state, may not be buried in the pit of oblivion, and so no good come thereof.”

The House, it seems, out of a reverent regard to her Majesty’s honor, stopped him before he had fully finished, and “he was sequestered the House for his said speech.” He was afterwards brought from the sergeant’s custody to answer for his speech to a committee of the House. All that passed is very curious.

“I do promise you all,” said this intrepid patriot, “if God forsake me not, that I will never, during life, hold my tongue, if any message is sent wherein God is dishonored, the prince perilled, or the liberties of the Parliament impeached.” And again: — “I beseech your Honors, discharge your consciences herein, and utter your knowledge simply as I do; for, in truth, herein her Majesty did abuse her nobility and subjects, and did oppose herself against them by the way of advice.”

“Surely we cannot deny it,” replied the committee; “you say the truth.” This speaker of the truth was, however, like many of his predecessors, sent to prison for “the violent and wicked words yesterday pronounced by him in this House touching the queen’s Majesty.”

This, it seems, was no surprise to him. In his examination before the committee, he had observed, — “I will assure your Honors, that twenty times and more, when I walked in my grounds revolving this speech, to prepare against this day, my own fearful conceit did say unto me, that this speech would carry me to the place whither I shall now go, and fear would have moved me to have put it out. Then I weighed whether in good conscience and the duty of a faithful subject I might keep myself out of prison, and not to warn my prince from walking in a dangerous course. My conscience said unto me, that I could not be a faithful subject, if I did more respect to avoid my own danger than my prince’s danger; herewithal I was made bold, and went forward as your Honors heard. Yet when I uttered those words in the House, that there was none without fault, no, not our noble queen, I paused, and beheld all your countenances, and saw plainly that those words did amaze you all; then I was afraid with you for company, and fear bade me to put out those words that followed, for your countenances did assure me that not one of you would stay me of my journey; . . . yet I spake it, and I praise God for it.”

You will now observe the conduct of Elizabeth. In a month after

wards, the queen was pleased to remit her displeasure, and to refer the enlargement of the party to the House; when the Chancellor of the Exchequer rose to expatiate, first, on her Majesty's good and clement nature; secondly, on her respect to the Commons; and, thirdly, their duty towards her. While he laid down, that the House were "not, under the pretence of liberty, to forget their bounden duty to so gracious a queen," he failed not to add, that "true it is, that nothing can be well concluded in a council where there is not allowed, in debating of causes brought in, deliberation, liberty, and freedom of speech"; and the whole tone of his harangue, which appears, even now, moderate and reasonable, being pronounced, as it was, by a minister of the crown, in the reign of Elizabeth, and in a set speech made for the occasion, must be considered, though the minister was more of a patriot than the rest, as indicating that the House really felt that Wentworth had been guilty rather in form than in substance, and had not offended against the spirit of the constitution, though the vigor and ability of Elizabeth's administration, and her jealousy of her prerogative, made it a task of difficulty, and even of personal danger, openly to resist her political maxims or disregard her menaces.

The few particulars that I have thus mentioned will, I hope, serve my purpose, — that of giving you some general notion, not only of this remarkable transaction, but of the whole subject that is so long to occupy your attention.

Eleven years afterwards, the same patriot and Puritan, on a similar occasion, handed forward to the Speaker a few articles by way of queries, among which we find one couched in the following words: — "Whether there be any council which can make, add to, or diminish from, the laws of the realm, but only this council of Parliament?" — a query which Wentworth conceived could be answered only in the negative (that there was no council but Parliament); and which, if so answered, would at once put an end to all the maxims and pretences of arbitrary power. It was for another century so to answer this important query, and not before a dreadful appeal had been made by the Commons and the crown to the uncertain decision of arms.

Not a session took place in the reign of Elizabeth which does not present some speech, or motion, or debate, characteristic of the times, and of the undefined nature of the constitution; and we have repeated specimens of the same sort of constitutional questions, the same sort of state difficulties, that took place in the subsequent reigns of James and Charles. But there is this important difference invariably to be observed: Elizabeth could always give way in time to render her concessions a favor. Unlike other arbitrary princes, and unlike chiefly in this particular, she did *not* think it a mark of political wisdom always to persevere when her authority was resisted



She did not suppose that her subjects, if she yielded to their petitions or complaints, would necessarily conclude that she did so from fear; she did not conclude, that, if she became more reasonable, they must necessarily become less so. With as high notions of her prerogative as any sovereign that can be mentioned, in her own nature most haughty and most imperious, she had still the good sense not only to perceive, but to act as if she perceived, that it was her interest to be beloved as well as respected; and her reign, if examined, shows a constant assertion and production of the powers of the prerogative, but still the most prudent management of it, and the most careful attention to public opinion. This last is a great merit in all sovereigns and their ministers, and, indeed, somewhat necessary to the virtue of all men, in private life as well as public.

Now the question is, successful and able as she was, what was it that imposed any restraint upon her disposition? Why did she so respect and abstain from the privileges which she might or might not think belonged to the Commons? Why did she temper the exercise of what she judged her own prerogative, make occasional concessions, and, after all, not be that arbitrary sovereign which, according to Hume, the constitution rendered her? There seems no answer but one: that such was the spirit of the constitution (whatever might be its letter), such was the effect it produced on the minds of her people, and of her houses of legislature, that, on the whole, it was not prudent, it would not have been thought sufficiently legal, for her to be often or systematically that absolute sovereign which the historian supposes her to have been. The conclusion, therefore, is, that the constitution was not, in fact, what *he* imagines. There is certainly some confusion in Hume; he does not distinguish between the constitution as originally understood before Henry the Seventh, and the constitution as it afterwards obtained in practice under the Tudors. Add to this, that it is in vain to look entirely at statutes and at courts, whether equitable or oppressive. The general spirit of the whole, the notions of it that are inherited and transmitted, the effect produced on the opinions and temperament of the public and of the rulers themselves, — *these* are the great objects to be considered, when we speak of a constitution.

It is but too obvious to remark the superiority of Elizabeth over her successors, particularly the unhappy Charles, in one most important requisite, — the art of discovering the state of the public mind, the art of appreciating well the nature of the times in which she lived. The fact seems to be, that the great merit, the sole merit, of this renowned queen was this: with great faults, bad passions, and most female weaknesses, she had still the spirit and the sense so to control her own nature, that, with the exception of her appointment of Leicester to charges the most critical, she never, like other sovereigns of similar faults, neglected the interests of her king-

dom, or by the indulgence of her own failings brought calamities on her subjects. This is an honorable distinction. If princes and ministers, in their real disposition as reprehensible and odious as Queen Elizabeth, would in practice become rulers as prudent and patriotic, the affairs of mankind would present a very different and far more pleasing appearance.

There is a Dialogue by Dr. Hurd on the times and personal qualities of Elizabeth, which is not long, and is well worth reading, where her character is very severely criticized, and feebly defended. Camden's Life of Queen Elizabeth may be consulted for minute particulars respecting the distinguished families and statesmen of those days, and for facts. The history is drawn up in the form of annals, — the style clear and unaffected; but there are no philosophic views, — no comments on the civil and religious liberties of the country, — little said of the Puritans or of the penal statutes against the Papists, — the conduct of Queen Elizabeth not properly criticized, — and the whole what one might expect from an honest, diligent man, whose patron was Cecil, and who wrote during the reign of James the First, at a time when history had not assumed her modern character of philosophy teaching by examples. This Camden is the celebrated antiquarian; and from the Biographia Britannica of Kippis it appears that great pains were taken with this work, and that it was much admired in its day. Camden had access to all the state papers of Lord Burleigh and of the public offices. — The publications of Birch may be consulted, — "Birch the indefatigable," as he was called by Gray.

The Journals of the Parliaments (folio edition, 1682), by Sir Simonds D'Ewes, is a work of authority connected with the reign of Queen Elizabeth. The preface is worth reading; it is animating, it is edifying, to see the piety and industry of these venerable men of former times. "Yet I have already," says he, "entered upon other and greater labors, conceiving myself not to be born for myself alone. . . . These I have proposed to myself to labor in, . . . like him that shoots at the sun, not in hopes to reach it, but to shoot as high as possibly his strength, art, or skill will permit. . . . Yet, if I can but finish a little in each kind, it may hereafter stir up some able judgments to add an end to the whole. . . . I shall always pray, as I do sincerely desire, that by all my endeavours God may be glorified, the truth, divine or human, vindicated, and the public benefited.

'Sic mihi contingat vivere, sicque mori.'

Most of what is to be found in Sir Simonds may be seen in the Parliamentary History, as published by Cobbett, with valuable additions from Strype.

From these debates some idea may be formed of the manners of the times, and of the minds of the great men that appeared in them; some idea, too, of the constitution.



Sergeant Heyle said, — “I marvel much that the House will stand upon granting of a subsidy, or the time of payment, when all we have is her Majesty’s.” “At which all the House hemmed, and laughed and talked.” — Page 633.

“He that will go about to debate her Majesty’s prerogative royal,” said Dr. Bennet, “had need walk warily.” — Page 645. See, too, Secretary Cecil’s speech, page 649. But the queen, after all, gave up the monopolies complained of.

Sir Edward Coke speaks very strongly in favor of the antiquity of the Commons, page 515. “At the first we were all one house, and sat together, by a precedent which I have of a Parliament holden before the Conquest, by Edward, the son of Etheldred; . . . . but the commons, sitting in presence of the king, and amongst the nobles, disliked it, . . . . and the house was divided, and came to sit asunder.” The facts do not seem to agree with this representation, our present House of Commons not being the same as the “*communitas*” of the ancient Parliament. And again, to the same effect Sir Edward Coke speaks in another place.

The chief points of interest in these debates are the speeches and queries of Peter Wentworth for freedom of speech, &c., discussions on the privileges of the Commons in case of arrests, &c., and on monopolies, when the queen’s prerogative came into question.

In Sir Simonds’s reports the Puritans and the penal laws against Papists, &c., do not make the appearance that might be expected. The notions then entertained on subjects of political economy appear particularly in the speeches of Sir Francis Bacon; and from the mistakes of such a man, and such men as were then around him, may be estimated the merits of Adam Smith, and the progress of improvement in the course of a century and a half.

The forms of Parliamentary proceedings and ceremonies may be studied in this work of Sir Simonds D’Ewes.

The same interest which belongs to the reign of Elizabeth belongs still more to the Parliamentary proceedings in the reign of James the First. The Commons and the sovereign seem of like disposition with their predecessors; but the former far more advanced in wisdom, and the latter in folly. The great contest between prerogative and freedom may be seen still ripening into fatal maturity; and the parties and maxims which so distinguished the reign of Charles the First are clearly visible.

The proceedings in Parliament, and the speeches of the king, are most of them marked by expressions and reasonings, the perusal of which can alone convey an adequate picture of the times, and of the revolution which was approaching. Many of them are very remarkable; one document more particularly, entitled, “An Apology of the House of Commons, made to the King, touching their Privileges.”

It was presented to the House by one of their committees. It is not easy to see how the cause of the people of England could be stated more reasonably or more ably. It is supposed to have been written by the great Bacon, and is so excellent as to seem quite superior to the age to which it belongs, and almost to induce a doubt of its authenticity. Its authenticity, however, seems on the whole not to be controverted. You will see it in Cobbett, and alluded to in Hume's notes.

The king appears to have formed one idea of the constitution, and the Commons another. Before the end of his reign he was brought to express himself in a manner somewhat more agreeable to the general spirit of the laws and customs of the realm, yet his reign was marked by a continual state of warfare, and an open rupture was at last the result.

Understanding that a protestation had been drawn up by the House on the subject of their privileges, he sent for their journal-book, and tore it out with his own hand. This protestation had affirmed, that the liberties, franchises, privileges, and jurisdiction of Parliament are the ancient and undoubted birthright and inheritance of the subjects of England; had asserted the competence of Parliament to consider such affairs as the king thought exclusively the objects of what, in the pride of his folly, he called his *state-craft*; had laid down the freedom of speech, the immunity from arrest, and the illegality of the king's giving credence (as it was called) with respect to the conduct of the members.

Such were the reasonable positions which the king resisted, and with such violence. The leading members of the Commons were at that time such men as Sir Edward Coke and Mr. Selden. James seems not to have been a sovereign determined in his character like Elizabeth, or brutal in his disposition like Henry the Eighth, but he was in theory always, and in practice sometimes, a despot; and the tendency of all his exertions was to render his successors so. The people of England have, therefore, an eternal obligation to the great and virtuous men who opposed his pretensions.

There is, however, one circumstance which took place in his reign, not noticed by Millar, which, as far as it can now be understood, seems favorable to the good intentions of this monarch, but at the same time strongly indicates how little the actors in a scene can appreciate their own situation. I will state shortly the circumstances, which do not, I think, appear to have been sufficiently noticed by our historians.

On the decline of the feudal system, the king was left to depend for the support of his own state, and even for the expenses of foreign war, first, on the claims of his feudal rights, and on the exercise of his prerogative, and, secondly, on the supplies of Parliament. These feudal claims and exercises of the prerogative were daily becoming,



from the changes that had taken place in the world, less valuable to the crown, and yet more injurious and offensive to the subject. But if these were to be entirely withdrawn, the sovereign was then to be left totally dependent on the favor of the Commons. It was neither in itself just, nor in any respect agreeable to the best interests of the people, that the sovereign should be thus deprived of all proper funds for the maintenance of his personal dignity and constitutional importance. The only expedient for avoiding all the evils that might ensue was, that the king should give up the feudal rights and prerogatives which his predecessors had exercised, and the Commons, in return, secure him an adequate revenue, a revenue which might be collected from the subjects with less injury to their civil freedom and growing prosperity.

In a few years after the king's accession, a scheme of this sort was actually in agitation. The Lords mediated, as usual, between the king and Commons. Even the terms of the bargain, or what was then very properly called the Great Contract, were all adjusted. The Parliament was prorogued in the summer to October; and all that remained was, that they should state the manner in which the sum agreed upon (two hundred thousand pounds per annum) was to be secured. But though the conferences and committees were resumed, no effectual progress was made, and the Parliament was dissolved in December, — nothing done. This great chance for avoiding all the evils that were impending was thus lost for ever.

We in vain inquire, by whose fault, by what unhappy train of circumstances, this golden opportunity was lost. The Journals of the Commons are here wanting; the Journals of the Lords give little or no information; nor do the contemporary historians assist us. The king in his proclamation, after alluding to the affair, says only, that, "for many good considerations known to himself, he hath now determined to dissolve this Parliament." When he called a new one, four years afterwards, he only observes in his speech, that he "will deal no more with them like a merchant, by way of exchange," — that he "will expect loving contribution for loving retribution," — that "to come to account with them how and what was too base for his quality." In another speech he alludes to some who had done ill offices between him and his Commons. The probability seems, that the higgling manner of the Commons had naturally disgusted the king, and that two hundred thousand pounds per annum was a sum larger, at that time, than they on their part durst commit to the exclusive disposal of the crown; and this conjecture is confirmed by a few words which I observe in a passage of one of Sir John Eliot's speeches, made some time after.

In a few months, this new Parliament was likewise dissolved, and in great ill-humor; yet nothing occurs in the speeches of the members, or elsewhere, with the casual exception just mentioned in Sir

John Eliot's hint, that throws any light on this important transaction. Neither the leaders of the Commons, therefore, with all their real ability, nor the king, with all his "state-craft," nor the historians at the time, much less the people, appear to have seen the crisis in which the realm was already placed, or that the best, perhaps only, system had been struck upon, and yet abandoned, for saving alike the people and the monarch from the dangers to which they were exposed. These dangers were now inevitable. The Commons had publicly stated the maxims of their conduct, — the principles, as they conceived, of the constitution. The king had indignantly torn them from their journals, as inconsistent with his rights and the honor of his crown. The great question of prerogative on the one side, and of privilege on the other, was therefore at issue; and it would have required far other abilities and virtues than those which his successor Charles possessed, to have been a guardian minister of good to his unhappy country, in a situation so little understood, and, however understood, so encompassed with difficulties.

Making every allowance for the imperfection of human judgment, making every allowance for the impossibility which seems always to exist either for king or people properly to comprehend their situation, when these dreadful revolutions are approaching, still the conduct of Charles appears totally infatuated. Admit that he entertained the same notions of the royal prerogative which his father had done, that he thought himself bound in honor to defend it, was it not clear that he must then adopt a system of economy, and avoid expense at home and wars abroad? If his Parliaments differed with him about his rights, could he on any other system do without them? Admit, again, that he lived in a religious age, when Papist and Protestant, when Roman Catholic, Lutheran, and Calvinist, gave each of them the most unreasonable importance, as they are always disposed to do, to their own particular doctrines and ceremonies, had not the nature of the religious principle sufficiently displayed itself? Had not the transactions in Germany, from the beginning of the Reformation, been a subject of the most *recent* history? Had not the efforts which the Calvinists made in France, had not the wars in the Low Countries, had not the success of the Hollanders, been exhibited immediately before his eyes? Could he draw no lesson for his own conduct from instances like these? Could all that he had even then witnessed in what is now called the Thirty Years' War in Germany produce no effect upon his understanding; and as if the ability and spirit of his English Parliaments were not sufficient for his embarrassment, was he still further to increase his difficulties, was he to go on and summon to his destruction all the furies of rage and fanaticism from Scotland? The wisest monarch, in the situation of Charles, might, no doubt, have failed; but it seems scarcely possible for his worst enemy to have advised more obvious and fatal mistakes than



those which, with all our compassion for his fate, we must allow that he committed.

With this period of our history we are certainly called upon to take more than ordinary pains. It has been highly labored by Hume; it has been considered, in his own manly and decisive manner, by Millar; it has been detailed by the virtuous Clarendon; a sort of journal of it has been made by Whitelocke; what a plain and gallant soldier thought may be seen in Ludlow; a more domestic view of it, in the Life of Colonel Hutchinson; and the Parliamentary proceedings and public documents may be examined in Cobbett, and particularly in Rushworth. Much more than this may be found, if sought for; but less than this can scarcely be sufficient for any one who would understand the history of the constitution of England.

There is a History of the Long Parliament by May; a History of the Independents by the Presbyterian Walker; papers collected by Nalson, who professes to correct Rushworth; and different memoirs, such as the Memoirs of Holles and Sir Philip Warwick. Since I drew up these lectures, the whole subject has been considered by Mr. Brodie, a searcher into original records, and a corrector of Hume. Mr. Godwin has published a work which must be considered as the defence of the Republican party. Miss Aikin has lately furnished us important Memoirs, which become in the course of the detail by far the best explanation and excuse for the conduct of the popular leaders, and more particularly the Long Parliament, that have as yet appeared. And on all and on every occasion, and on all the critical points of this memorable contest, Hallam will be found totally invaluable.

But we must, in the first place, attend to the philosophical reflections and statements of Hume and Millar. The situation of the different orders of the state, and of the various religious sects, the views and interests of each, and those general principles of government which can apply to this interesting period, — all these are very ably stated by these writers; and their account, when compared with the documents in Rushworth, with the Parliamentary speeches, and with the sincere, though apologetical, narrative of Clarendon, may enable every reader to draw his own conclusions. I must by no means forget the important work of Rapin, always unaffected and laborious, a work which may readily and ought always to be compared with Hume.

But having referred my hearer to these histories and documents, I must leave him to the perusal of them in the whole or in part. They are too numerous, various, and interesting even to be properly described; they can only be mentioned. In like manner, the reflections of Hume and Millar are all of them far too valuable to be presented to you in any garbled manner here, and, indeed, are far too well expressed to be produced in any words but their own. All that

I can attempt, therefore, in the ensuing lectures is this, — to offer a few observations, such as I conceive may possibly be of use to those who undertake the perusal of all or any of the books I have recommended, such as may, perhaps, enable them to exercise their own diligence and their own powers of reflection with the better effect.

In the first place, then, I would suggest that there are two leading considerations in this subject which should always be kept in view. The first is this: — What was the effect of these transactions on the constitution *ultimately*, — *on the whole*? Secondly, What were the comparative merits and demerits of the contending parties?

The first consideration must, of course, be suspended till we can turn and look back from a very distant point of view, such as the Revolution of 1688, when these disputes were brought to a species of close. It is the second consideration, the merits and demerits of the contending parties, which is more within the reach of our attention at present. And even in this last question the first will be found continually implicated.

With respect to this last inquiry, the comparative merits and demerits of the parties, what I would recommend is, that the whole of the reign of Charles should be separated into different intervals, and an estimate and comparison made of the conduct of the parties during each of these intervals. This estimate may be very different during different intervals; and it is from a consideration of the whole that a verdict must at last be pronounced.

I shall in this and the ensuing lectures endeavour to give you a more distinct idea of what I have just proposed, and I shall attempt to do in a summary manner what, as I conceive, you may with some advantage execute hereafter more regularly for yourselves, as you read the history and the proper documents connected with it.

The first period which I select as an interval is from the accession of Charles to the dissolution of his third Parliament, in 1629, an interval of four years.

But before this interval, or any part of the question, be examined, one observation must be made; it is this: that, in appreciating the comparative merits of the two contending parties, it is most important to consider what was their conduct at the commencement of their differences, and before the rupture actually took place, — that is, which was *at first* the offending party. *Afterwards* it is *too late* for either of them to be wise. Offences and injuries generate each other, from the very nature of human infirmity; the decision is soon committed to violence and force; and those are the most guilty who have been the original means of reducing themselves or their opponents to such dreadful extremities.

This being premised, we are to examine, in the next place, this short, but, for the reason I have just mentioned, this most critical period, this first interval of four years.



And to me it appears that it would be difficult to say how the king could have conducted himself in a manner less deserving of our approbation. Read the history, and then consider, were not his notions inconsistent, not only with the civil liberty which belongs to a free monarchy, but with the measure of civil freedom which at that time belonged to the English monarchy? Again, had his people any other hold upon him but their House of Commons? Had the Commons any, but his necessities? Did they, therefore, in the last place, push their power of extorting concessions in return for their supplies to any extent not required by the public good, or rather, to any extent not required by the constitution, even as then understood?

Take, for a specimen of the whole subject, the proceedings on the famous Petition of Right.

When we, in the first place, read the history, and observe all the shifts and efforts of the king to evade it, and all the anxiety and labor of the Commons to prepare it, and when we afterwards come to read the petition itself, the first sensation is surely that of extreme surprise; for it actually appears to contain no declaration and no provision that we should not have hoped that Charles, or any other English monarch from the time of Magna Charta, would have assented to with cheerfulness.

One observation, however, is to be made: the Petition of Right did, in fact, endeavour to settle, or rather, to confirm, for ever, one particular point, which may not, at the first reading of the petition, sufficiently occur to you; this point was the personal liberty of the subject.

This petition, and this particular question of the personal liberty of the subject, have been considered at length and with due diligence by Hume, and his observations must be well examined and weighed. The personal liberty of the subject, you will observe, is the great point.

There is a political difficulty, no doubt, in the question. Thus, it is fit that every government should have a power of imprisonment, even *without showing cause*; because very extraordinary occasions may arise; a rebellion, for instance, may be reasonably apprehended. But this Petition of Right gives *no* such occasional power, allows of no exceptions in any supposed case, but lays down the personal freedom of the subject in *all situations* but those in which the subject has already become obnoxious to the existing laws. This, therefore, does not seem a proper adjustment of the great question of the personal liberty of the subject.

It must, however, be observed, that it was on account of no theoretical objection of this kind that Charles was resolved, if possible, not to assent to the Petition of Right. The real reasons of his opposition were these: because he had no means of raising money by

the exertions of his prerogative, unless he could throw men into prison without showing cause, if they resisted his requisitions ; and because he had no expedient for controlling the freedom of speech in the houses of Parliament, unless it was, on the whole, understood that the members were within reach of what he and the Lords called his sovereign power. There can surely, therefore, be no doubt, that, if the Commons had not made provision against this claim of the crown, it would soon have been totally unsafe and impossible for any member in Parliament, or any subject out of it, to offer any legal resistance to the arbitrary measures of the king ; and the contest must at length have terminated entirely against the constitution. Charles had exercised a power of imprisonment on pretences and for purposes totally incompatible with all liberty ; what was left for the Commons but to insist upon it, as a fixed principle, that no man should be imprisoned without cause shown ?

But what are we to say, when we find that this had always been the language of the constitution, from Magna Charta down to that moment ? “The truth is,” says Mr. Hume, “the Great Charter and the old statutes were sufficiently clear in favor of personal liberty. But as all kings of England had ever, in cases of necessity or expediency, been accustomed at intervals to elude them, and as Charles, in a complication of instances, had lately violated them, the Commons judged it requisite to enact a new law, which might not be eluded or violated by any interpretation, construction, or contrary precedent. Nor was it sufficient, they thought, that the king promised to return into the way of his predecessors. His predecessors in all times had enjoyed too much discretionary power, and, by his recent abuse of it, the whole world had reason to see the necessity of entirely retrenching it.” These are the words of Mr. Hume.

But upon this statement of Mr. Hume, does not the conduct of the Commons appear perfectly constitutional and perfectly reasonable ? With what propriety is Mr. Hume, at the close of this subject, to use the following expressions ? — “It may be affirmed, without any exaggeration, that the king’s assent to the Petition of Right produced such a change in the government as was almost equivalent to a revolution.” How could this enactment of the Petition of Right, this confirmation of Magna Charta and the old statutes, which were already so clear in favor of personal liberty, — how can this new assertion of what had always been asserted, this new assertion in times of such extreme peril to the constitution, — how can this be represented as equivalent to a revolution ?

The great political difficulty of the personal liberty of the subject, which was thus decided by the Commons *entirely* in favor of the subject, according to the ancient laws and constitution of the realm, was not settled with philosophical accuracy by the Petition of Right. To have expected this in such times was to expect too much. After-



wards it was more skilfully provided for, as is well known, by making effective the writ of Habeas Corpus, in the first place, and by the occasional suspension of the writ, in the second. In consequence of this writ, made at last available, no man can now be kept in prison without cause shown; and when the writ is to be suspended, and men are to be kept in prison without cause shown, the suspension is asked for by the executive power, and is assented to by the legislative power for a time specified, and on reasons first produced and deemed sufficient. The general freedom of the subject is thus secured, and the very necessary interference of government in an arbitrary manner, occasionally, to protect the community from the concealed practices of foreign or domestic traitors, is thus admitted. This is, I conceive, a very happy adjustment of one of the greatest difficulties that belong to the science of government.

Observe, however, it is quite clear, that, from the moment the writ of Habeas Corpus is suspended, and the executive power can throw men into prison without showing cause, the government is at once changed from a free to an arbitrary government; and that the liberties of the country are, from that instant, left to depend on the spirit of freedom, and on the habits of right thinking, that have already been generated by that free constitution, not only in the houses of Parliament, the judges of the land, and the people, but even in the executive power itself. The question, therefore, that remains is, whether this justly celebrated writ of Habeas Corpus would now exist in our constitution, if it had not been for the exertions of the Commons in the reign of Charles the First, and more particularly on this occasion of the Petition of Right, — and whether, if it had not been for these exertions, an order from a secretary of state, and the Tower, might not have been as common in England, as *lettres de cachet* and the Bastile were once in France.

I will now select another general specimen of these times, and of the struggle before us, — the question of tonnage and poundage.

To me it appears, I confess, that the only point, on which the exact propriety of the conduct of the Commons, during the whole of this period of the first three Parliaments, may be at all questioned, lies here; — I do not mean their original resistance to the crown, in the question of tonnage and poundage, but their final management and behaviour at the close of this transaction.

The king had in this instance, as in all the rest, acted most unskilfully and unjustifiably; still, he had at last given up the right, and that publicly. But this, it seems, did not content the Commons; they proceeded immediately to carry the right, thus admitted, into practical and visible effect. They insisted upon granting the duties for a year only, with a view to alter the customary mode of granting them, and, by thus exemplifying their right, to settle the question for ever.

Now this appears to me to have been wrong; it was harsh, offensive, and had the air of a triumph over a fallen adversary. It would have been better to have made allowance for the king's situation and feelings; to have been satisfied, *for the present*, with the king's surrender of the point in theory; to have sacrificed something of constitutional precision, for the sake of an object so important as a sincere accommodation with the executive branch of the legislature; in short, to have indulged the sovereign, even in his unreasonableness and mistakes, since the contest had evidently turned in their favor, and they could do it without hazard. In all political struggles, there is no duty so seldom practised, and so necessary to society, as a forbearance and magnanimity of this nature. The Commons thought otherwise, and I do not deny that their situation was very critical, and that much may be urged in opposition to what I have thus suggested.

The second and next interval which I would select is from the end of the first four years of Charles's reign, from 1629, to 1640, — a most remarkable interval of eleven years, and which is extremely important.

Here a new scene opens. We have no longer, as hitherto, the king calling Parliaments, and then demanding the grant of supplies, as the condition of his favor; and the Commons, in their turn, requiring the admission of constitutional claims, as the condition of their subsidies. We have no longer prorogations, dissolutions, imprisonment of the members, and, during the intermission of Parliament, loans and benevolences. But we have now a resolution to call Parliaments no more; we have what were before occasional expedients converted into a system of regular government; we have every effort exerted to make the prerogative of the crown *supply the place* of Parliaments; and this plan of government persevered in for eleven years together.

Now it is very evident, that, if this experiment had succeeded, — if Charles the First could have ruled without Parliaments, as he was to be followed by such princes as his sons really were, and must necessarily have been made, — no difference could have long remained between the English monarchy and the French; and Charles the First, though amiable in private life, a man of virtue and of religion, would, in fact, have been the destroyer of the liberties of his country, and, in this important respect, precisely on a level with the perfidious and detestable tyrant of France, Louis the Eleventh.

This part of the history ought to be well observed. The illegal expedients, or, as Mr. Hume calls them, the *irregular* levies of money, that were resorted to, and the cruel sentences, or, as Mr. Hume denominates them, the *severities*, of the Star-Chamber and High Commission, may be gathered even from one of Mr. Hume's own chapters, the fifty-second, which you must particularly observe.



The Puritans everywhere fled, preferring to the fair lands of England the savage and untamed wilds of America, — wilds where their persons were yet free, and their minds their own. Haslerig, Pym, and Cromwell, even Hampden, had embarked, but were prevented from proceeding by an order of government.

This last anecdote has been shown to be a mistake of the historians by Miss Aikin, who was the first to suspect and examine into the truth of this statement, with her usual discernment and diligence. Of course, the conclusions I had drawn from a circumstance so striking as the flight of such leaders are now omitted.

But I shall conclude this lecture by endeavouring to present to you the danger to which the constitution of this country was in reality exposed from another point of view. It may be collected, I conceive, even from the manner in which so intelligent a philosopher as Hume and so sincere a patriot as Lord Clarendon have thought proper to express themselves on this occasion. The passages I mean to quote are a little longer than I could wish; but I conceive, that, when fairly stated, they exemplify so completely the peculiar perils of our free government at this particular period of our history, that I do not venture to abridge them much, and certainly not to make any alterations in the expressions or sense.

Mr. Hume, after detailing in the fifty-second chapter a series of incidents which show that the person and property of every man of spirit in the country were at the mercy of the court, begins the next chapter with the following words: — “The grievances under which the English labored, when considered in themselves, without regard to the constitution, scarcely deserve the name; nor were they either burdensome on the people’s properties, or anywise shocking to the natural humanity of mankind. Even the imposition of ship-money, independent of the consequences, was rather an advantage\* to the public, by the judicious use which the king made of the money levied by that expedient.” Again: — “All ecclesiastical affairs were settled by law and uninterrupted precedent; and the Church was become a considerable barrier to the power, both legal and illegal, of the crown. Peace, too, industry, commerce, opulence, — nay, even justice and lenity of administration, notwithstanding some very few exceptions, — all these were enjoyed by the people, and every other blessing of government, except liberty, or rather the present exercise of liberty and its proper security.”

Observe now Lord Clarendon; observe the facts that he first lays down, and then the remarks which he thinks it necessary to subjoin. His facts are these: — “Supplemental acts of state were made to sup-

\* This is the reading of the earlier editions. But his subsequent reflections seem to have impressed Mr. Hume with a deeper sense of the merits of this imposition, and he accordingly, in the final revision of his work, substituted the expression, “a great and evident advantage.” — N.

ply defect of laws ; . . . . . obsolete laws were revived and rigorously executed ; . . . . . the law of knighthood [was revived], which . . . . . was very grievous ; and no less unjust projects of all kinds, many ridiculous, many scandalous, all very grievous, were set on foot ; . . . . . the old laws of the forest were revived ; . . . . . lastly, for a spring and magazine that should have no bottom, and for an everlasting supply of all occasions, a writ was framed in a form of law," &c., &c., — the writ of ship-money. He tells us, that, "for the better support of these extraordinary ways, and to protect the agents and instruments who must be employed in them, and to discountenance and suppress all bold inquiries and opposers, the Council-Table and Star-Chamber enlarge their jurisdictions to a vast extent, 'holding,' as Thucydides said of the Athenians, 'for honorable that which pleased, and for just that which profited' ; and, being the same persons in several rooms, grew both courts of law to determine right, and courts of revenue to bring money into the treasury : the Council-Table, by proclamations, enjoining to the people what was not enjoined by the law, and prohibiting that which was not prohibited ; and the Star-Chamber censuring the breach and disobedience to those proclamations, by very great fines and imprisonment ; so that any disrespect to any acts of state, or to the persons of statesmen, was in no time more penal ; and those foundations of right, by which men valued their security, to the apprehension and understanding of wise men, never more in danger to be destroyed."

And yet at the close of his description of this most alarming state of England, what are his observations ? They are these : — "Now after all this, I must be so just as to say, that, during the whole time that these pressures were exercised, and those new and extraordinary ways were run, this kingdom enjoyed the greatest calm, and the fullest measure of felicity, that any people, in any age, for so long time together," that is, for the above-mentioned eleven or twelve years, "have been blessed with, to the wonder and envy of all the other parts of Christendom." Soon after he adds, having first given a more distinct enumeration of the blessings which England enjoyed, these words : — "Lastly, for a complement of all these blessings, they were enjoyed by and under the protection of a king of the most harmless disposition, the most exemplary piety, the greatest sobriety, chastity, and mercy, that any prince hath been endowed with." Such are the words of Lord Clarendon.

Now what I have to press upon your reflections is this : — If men like these, — a calm, deliberating philosopher like Hume (though favorable to monarchy, yet certainly not meaning to be unfavorable to the interests of mankind), — if Hume, at the distance of more than a century, in the security of his closet, and Clarendon, a lover of the constitution, of his country, a patriotic statesman, while delivering, as he rightly conceived, a work to posterity, — if such men



could think that *these* were observations on the subject too reasonable to be withheld from the minds of their readers, how difficult must it have been for men at the time to escape from the soothing, the fatal, influence of such considerations,—this supposed prosperity of their country, this peace, this order, these domestic virtues and piety of their king, their safety under his kind protection! how difficult to be generous enough to think of those Englishmen who were to follow them, rather than of themselves! how difficult to encounter the terrors of fines and imprisonments, for the sake of any thing so vague, so abstract, so disputed (such might have been their language), as the constitution of their country! how difficult to resist all those very prudent suggestions with which sensible men, like Hume and Clarendon, not to say the minions of baseness and servility, could have so readily supplied them! how difficult, when all that was required of them was a little silence, and the occasional payment of a tax of a few shillings!

Yet, if our ancestors had not escaped from the soothing, the fatal, influence of such considerations,—if they had not thought that there was something still more to be required for their country than all this peace, and industry, and commerce, this calm of felicity, this protection and repose, under the most virtuous and merciful of kings,—if they had not resisted with contempt and scorn all the very prudent suggestions with which their minds might have been so easily accommodated,—if they had not been content to encounter the terrors of fines and imprisonments, the loss of their domestic comforts, the prospects of lingering disease and death, for the sake of their civil and religious liberties,—if they had not had the generosity and magnanimity, the virtue and the heroism, to think of their descendants as well as themselves,—what, it may surely be asked, would *now* be the situation of those descendants, and where would now be the renowned constitution of England?

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## LECTURE XV.

### CHARLES THE FIRST.

IN my last lecture I proposed to my hearers, when they came to the examination of this most interesting reign of Charles the First, to divide it into different intervals, and, during these intervals, to compare the conduct of the king and his Parliaments, the better to

appreciate, on the whole, the merits and demerits of the contending parties.

Disquisitions of this kind form an important part of the instruction of history; the great principles of human conduct are, on these occasions, examined and reflected upon, and we are thus enabled to draw general conclusions. The language, for instance, which I yesterday quoted from Lord Clarendon, constituted, no doubt, much of his conversation to those around him at the time; we see it afterwards the language of Hume; it will be the language of a certain portion of the community, and that by no means the least respectable, at all times, whenever the conduct of any government becomes the subject of inquiry and remark. I therefore draw your attention to it. But I observed then, and I must repeat now, that such sentiments would have been fatal to our ancestors and ourselves, if they had prevailed in the time of Charles. Their tendency is more or less fatal in every period of society; and when a mixed and free constitution has been at length established, and general prosperity has been the natural result, this turn of thinking seems to be one of the last, but certainly one of the most formidable, enemies which any such mixed and free constitution has to encounter.

After dividing the reign of Charles into two intervals, — the first, of four years from his accession, the next, of eleven years immediately succeeding, — I mentioned to you, as a specimen of the transactions that took place, the Petition of Right and the question of tonnage and poundage. They gave occasion to the quotations I recommended to your attention from Clarendon and Hume.

It is to this second interval that belongs the celebrated question of ship-money. The very name of Hampden will recall it to your mind. Observe the instruction which is to be derived from some of the circumstances that took place; observe the manner in which the great leaders of the popular party could be brought over to the court; how even a man so able and so severe as the celebrated Noy, the attorney-general, could be so misled, or so flattered, as to become, in fact, the author of the writ for ship-money; how the judges themselves could be tampered with; how an opinion which they pronounced theoretically, and in the abstract, could be abused in practice, and turned to the most illegal purposes; how an exercise of the prerogative, confined and bounded in its original application, could be extended indefinitely, and converted into a regular mode of legislation, which it was no longer necessary in the court to justify, or allowable for the subject to question: when remarks like these have been made, we may surely see but too plainly how many are the dangers to which all civil liberty must be for ever exposed, — how precarious, as well as precious, is the blessing. Let us honor, as we ought, the constitution of England, but let us consider, as we ought, how and from whom we have received it, and we may then learn to pronounce with gratitude and reverence the name of Hampden.



Such, indeed, have been the sentiments with which that name has always been pronounced by Englishmen. The historian, Hume himself, seems affected for one short moment by the common enthusiasm, when he arrives at this part of his narrative. When this assertor of the public cause, says he, had resisted the levy of ship-money, "the prejudiced or prostituted\* judges, four excepted, gave sentence in favor of the crown. Hampden, however, obtained by the trial the end for which he had so generously sacrificed his safety and his quiet; the people were roused from their lethargy, and became sensible of the danger to which their liberty was exposed. These national questions were canvassed in every company, and the more they were examined, the more evidently did it appear to many that liberty was totally subverted, and an unusual and arbitrary authority exercised over the kingdom. Slavish principles, they said, concurred with illegal practices; ecclesiastical tyranny gave aid to civil usurpation; iniquitous taxes were supported by arbitrary punishments; and all the privileges of the nation, transmitted through so many ages, secured by so many laws, and purchased by the blood of so many heroes and patriots, now lay prostrate at the feet of the monarch! What, though public peace and national industry increased the commerce and opulence of the kingdom? This advantage was temporary, and due alone, not to any encouragement given by the crown, but to the spirit of the English, the remains of their ancient freedom. What, though the personal character of the king, amidst all his misguided councils, might merit indulgence, or even praise? He was but one man; and the privileges of the people, the inheritance of millions, were too valuable to be sacrificed to his prejudices and mistakes."

Here Mr. Hume, as if conscious what might be the influence of the eloquent reasonings and just statements which he was exhibiting, stops short, — it was certainly high time; and, as if unwilling that his reader should be excited to a sentiment of patriotism too unqualified, he immediately subjoins: — "Such, or more severe, were the sentiments promoted by a great party in the nation. No excuse, on the king's part, or alleviation, however reasonable, could be hearkened to or admitted; and to redress these grievances, a Parliament was impatiently longed for, or any other incident, however calamitous, that might secure the people against those oppressions which they felt, or the greater ills which they apprehended from the combined encroachments of church and state."

My hearers will easily conceive that it is impossible for me in the slightest manner to enter into any detail of the merits or demerits of

\* In the editions containing Hume's final corrections this epithet is expunged; doubtless as being one of the "many villanous, seditious Whig strokes" which he says "had crept into the work," in consequence of "the plaguy prejudices of Whiggism with which he was too much infected when he began it." See *Burton's Life and Correspondence of Hume* (Edinburgh, 1846), Vol. ii. pp. 144, 434. — N.

the political questions that were agitated and of the struggle that existed during these two intervals of four and of eleven years. I have attempted to do what alone I can hope to do; I have pointed out a few of the more leading topics of political dissension, as specimens of the whole, and have offered such observations upon them as I am willing to believe my hearers, when they come to examine the history, will think reasonable. But we must now look at this subject from another point of view.

I have already apprised you that the Reformation had produced in England, as well as in other countries, great differences of opinion on religious subjects, and that, therefore, the religious principle got at length entangled in the political questions that agitated the nation. This will be immediately apparent. I have already touched upon a few of the points of civil dispute between the sovereign and his Parliaments; I must, therefore, now allude to those of a religious nature, and therefore to the system of measures which Charles pursued with respect to the neighbouring kingdom of Scotland.

It is observed by Mr. Hume, in the beginning of his fifty-third chapter, that "it was justly apprehended that such precedents," (alluding to those that took place on the disuse of Parliaments,) "if patiently submitted to, would end in a total disuse of Parliaments, and in the establishment of arbitrary authority"; but that "Charles dreaded no opposition from the people, who are not commonly much affected with consequences, and require some striking motive to engage them in a resistance of established government."

This inertness and want of foresight, which the historian so justly supposes to belong to the mass of every community, would be, of all the characteristics of our nature, one of the most beneficial, if the rulers of mankind would not ungenerously abuse it; but this they are always ready to do, often to the injury of the public, and sometimes even to their own destruction.

Charles had been persevering in this faulty, or rather criminal course, for some time after the fourth year of his reign; but as he added folly to his political transgressions, he at last supplied his subjects with that "striking motive" which the historian justly represents as so necessary to rouse a people into rebellion.

Unfortunately for his royal house, both he and his father lived in a religious age, and their particular temperaments impelled them to introduce the religious principle into politics; an unworthy direction, which, of itself, it would have been but too apt to take in the existing circumstances of the world. James the First had pronounced the celebrated maxim of "No bishop, no king." The divines of the Church of England were in these times not wanting in their endeavours to establish the doctrine of passive obedience; it was, indeed, supposed to be the unqualified doctrine of the Scriptures. A sympathy and a supposed bond of interest, to be carried blindly to any



unconstitutional length, were thus unhappily formed between the regal and episcopal power. Add to this, that the religion of Charles and the famous Laud was narrow and intolerant; and in a fatal hour it was resolved to introduce the canons and liturgy of the Church of England, or rather a modification of them, that was even more offensive, into Scotland.

It is needless to speak of the injustice as well as the imprudence of such an experiment; but it is too important a feature in the portrait of these times not to require the most perfect consideration of every reader of our history. All that can be said in extenuation of Charles may be seen in Clarendon and in Hume; but you will do well to peruse much of this part of the history in Burnet; and certainly in Rushworth's Collections, where the dissimulation, obstinacy, and folly of the king are more fully shown than in Hume or in Clarendon, and where the fanaticism of the members of the Scotch Church, or of the Kirk, may also be seen more completely, by being displayed in the very words and expressions which they themselves used, and of which no adequate description can be given. Their Solemn League and Covenant, now that we are out of the reach of it, is, in spite of the seriousness of the subject, and the tremendous effects it produced, such a specimen of the Presbyterians and of the times, as to be, I had almost said, amusing. I do not, upon the whole, think it proper to be quoted here, but you will of course peruse it attentively.

It was in vain that Charles at length made concessions to his Scottish subjects; these concessions were never made in time, and were never sufficient for the occasion. They never deserved the praise of magnanimity; and they therefore never reaped the benefit of it. From the first, his cause in Scotland was continually verging to defeat and disgrace. However necessary he and Laud might conceive their own ecclesiastical institutions to be, the Covenanters were equally clear that such relics and images of Popery were quite fatal to all rational hopes of acceptance with the Deity. The king drew the sword, — the obvious consequence, but the last fatal consummation of his impolicy and intolerance. On the one hand, contributions were levied, by the influence of Laud, on the ecclesiastical bodies of England; while, on the other, the pulpits of Scotland resounded with anathemas against those who went not out to assist the Lord against the mighty: "Curse ye Meroz, curse ye bitterly," &c., &c. The result was, as it is desirable it may always be, that the cause of intolerance was successfully resisted.

But the effects of this attempt of Charles and Laud were not to end with Scotland. The king could not wage war without expense, nor encounter expense without pressing upon his English subjects. After having made a pacification with the Scots, the king could not persuade himself fairly to give up the contest, and he therefore once

more collected an army, — an army which he could not pay; and for the purpose of paying it, he was at last obliged to summon once more an English Parliament, — and this, after an intermission of eleven years, and after all his tyrannical expedients to do without one.

And here commences a third interval, which I should propose to extend only to the king's journey into Scotland in the August of 1641. This interval includes the *whole sitting* of the Parliament now called, and the *first period* of the proceedings of the next, the noted Parliament, afterwards called the Long Parliament; it is a short interval of about a year; but it is clearly to be distinguished from the two former intervals, when the conduct of the king was so deserving of reprobation, and again from the fourth or last interval, when the conduct of the Parliament was unequivocally wrong. Even in this third, this intermediate interval, the king was still, as I conceive, to be blamed, and the Parliament to be praised; but this blame and this praise become now more questionable, and not to be given without some hesitation and reserve.

When the Parliament met, it was soon evident that the king only wanted money; while the Commons, on *their* part, were chiefly anxious for proper admissions on *his*, to secure the liberty of the subject. He could not wait, he said, for the result of discussions of this nature; and desired to be supplied in the first place, and to be trusted on his promise for a subsequent redress of their grievances. The Parliament civilly evaded his request, and would not comply, — that is, would not, in fact, trust his promise; they were therefore dissolved in haste and anger.

This important measure, which was decisive of his fate and of the peace of the community, will be found, on examination, though it may not at first sight appear so, impolitic and unjustifiable. "The vessel was now full," says Lord Bolingbroke, "and this last drop made the waters of bitterness overflow." It was the subject of the most sincere lamentation, and evidently a measure much disapproved by Lord Clarendon, then Mr. Hyde, and a most valuable member of the House of Commons, valuable both to the king and people.

This unfortunate prince seems to have been, even at this advanced period of these dissensions, totally unable to comprehend his own situation, or make the slightest provision for future contingencies. As money could not be raised by Parliament, the former illegal expedients were renewed. And we are here to consider what was the object, all this time, which the king was so resolved to accomplish. Was it justifiable, — the introduction of Laud's canons and liturgy into Scotland? The event was, that an army undisciplined and ill paid was led against the Scots, and found unfit to contend with them; and every thing being reduced to a state of exasperation and despair, the king, after calling a council of the peers at York, once more



thought proper to summon a Parliament. It was the last he ever did summon; it was the Long Parliament.

Hitherto the feelings of Englishmen will sufficiently sympathize with the proceedings of the Commons. But as the contest between prerogative and privilege was longer continued, and grew more and more warm, it must necessarily be expected that the hazards and perplexities of the great leaders of the House of Commons were to increase, and that right decisions were to be attained with more difficulty. After having been tried in the perilous warfare of doubtful and dangerous contest, a severer trial yet remained, that of success. They were now, if possible, though successful, to be wise and moderate.

In civil dissensions it is quite impossible to suppose that misconduct will be found only on one side. Outrage and folly in one party are necessarily followed by similar offences in the other; and from the condition of human infirmity, it must inevitably happen, that, in examining the merits and demerits of actors in scenes like these, the question is soon altered, and, ceasing to be an inquiry of which is in the right, becomes rather an investigation of which is least in the wrong.

To the lasting honor of the Long Parliament, and, by implication, of the Parliaments that preceded, it does not appear that its measures were, for a certain period, with one exception, the attainder of Lord Strafford, and perhaps also the vote for their own continuance, at all censurable; on the contrary, they were highly laudable. The members of the Long Parliament would surely have been unworthy of their office, if they had not provided for the meeting of Parliaments, the integrity of the judges, the extinction of monopolies, and the abolition of the Council of York, and the courts of Star-Chamber and High Commission.

Lord Falkland and Lord Clarendon concurred, for a time, with the measures of the popular party of this Long Parliament; and "the major part" of the House is stated by the latter to have "consisted of men who had no mind to break the peace of the kingdom, or to make any considerable alteration in the government of church or state." Mr. Hume himself, in his fifty-fourth chapter, gives the following opinion; — observe the very considerate candor of his remarks: — "In short, if we take a survey of the transactions of this memorable Parliament," that is, the Long Parliament, "during the *first* period of its operations," the period we are now considering, "we shall find, that, excepting Strafford's attainder, which was a complication of cruel iniquity, their merits in other respects so much outweigh their mistakes, as to entitle them to praise from all lovers of liberty. Not only were former abuses remedied and grievances redressed, great provision for the future was made by law against the return of like complaints; and if the means by which they obtained such advantages

savor often of artifice, sometimes of violence, it is to be considered that revolutions of government cannot be effected by the mere force of argument and reasoning, and that, factions being once excited, men can neither so firmly regulate the tempers of others, nor their own, as to insure themselves against all exorbitancies." The admissions of Mr. Hume are often very striking.

Down, therefore, to the king's journey into Scotland in August, 1641, the student will find, that, with the exceptions before stated, the attainder of Lord Strafford, and perhaps the vote of their own continuance, he may consider his country as for ever indebted to those who thus far resisted the arbitrary practices of prerogative; that thus far they are perfectly entitled to the highest of all praise, — the praise of steady, courageous, and enlightened patriotism.

The next interval that may be taken is the period that elapsed between the king's journey to Scotland in August, 1641, and the commencement of hostilities. During this, the fourth interval, the measures of the Commons became violent and unconstitutional. That this should be the case may be lamented, but cannot, for the reasons already mentioned, excite much surprise. There were, however, various circumstances which still further contributed most unhappily to produce these mistaken and blamable proceedings. I will mention some of them; they must be considered as explanations and palliatives of the faults that were committed.

For instance, and in the first place, Lord Clarendon, after giving the testimony which I have quoted, to the general good intentions of the Long Parliament, distinguishes the *great body* of the House from some of the great leaders of the popular party, — from Pym, Hampden, St. John, Fiennes, Sir Harry Vane, and Denzil Holles, &c. That men like these, men of great ability, should be found in an assembly like the House of Commons is not to be wondered at; nor that such men should be of a high and impetuous nature, or should succeed in their endeavours to lead the rest, — men of calmer sense and more moderate tempers. Finally, we cannot be surprised that moderate men of this last description should be deficient in their attendance on the House, should be wanting in activity, and, above all, in a just confidence in themselves. That all this should happen, as, according to the noble historian, seems to have been the case, may readily be supposed. This inactivity, however, this want of confidence in themselves, was fatal to the state; and it is from circumstances like these that this period of our history is only rendered still more deserving of the study of every Englishman, and of all posterity; that men of genius, who are the more daring guides, may learn the temptations of their particular nature, and that men of colder sense, who are the more safe guides, may be taught their own value, — may be made to feel that it is they alone who ought, not indeed to propose, but ultimately to decide, and, though they



may not apparently lead, at least determine and in fact prescribe the course that is to be pursued, — that it is their duty in this, their proper province, to exert themselves manfully and without ceasing.

For instance, the great occasion on which the moderate party failed was in the prosecution of Lord Strafford. That he was to be impeached by the leaders must have been expected ; that he deserved it may be admitted ; but that, when the existing laws did not sentence him to condign punishment, when no ingenuity could prove that he had capitally offended, then for the leaders to bring in a bill of attainder, that is, a bill to execute him with or without law, by the paramount authority of Parliament, or rather of the House of Commons, acting merely on their own moral estimation of the case, — all this was what no moderate, reasonable men should ever have admitted ; and they ought surely to have considered, that, if they were once to be hurried over an act of injustice, a real crime against the laws, like this, it was impossible to say into what offences they might not afterwards be plunged, by the violence of which they saw their leaders were certainly capable, on the one part, and by what they already knew of the indiscretion and arbitrary nature of the king, on the other.

The very animated and eloquent Lord Digby exerted his great powers on this occasion. There is something of a doubtful shade hangs over the purity of his conduct in these transactions. But his speech to the House of Commons is on record, and ought to have decided the vote of every member present. It should by all means be read ; you will find it in Cobbett. The proceedings of the House, and the fate of the speech, — for it was too just and sensible not to excite indignation at the time and to be burnt by the common hangman, — afford a lesson which should never be forgotten.

The multitude, ever clamorous for punishment and public executions, ever careless of those forms of law in which they are of all others so deeply interested, might well have terrified even the Commons themselves, and made them pause ; a very little self-examination might have enabled these legislators to discover that they saw displayed in the furious looks and voices of the mob only a ruder image of their own intemperate thirst for vengeance and dangerous disregard of the established principles of justice.

But to proceed with my subject. I will now mention another reason to account for the unconstitutional proceedings of the Commons, in addition to the reason just alluded to, the inertness of the moderate men. It is this : the peculiar nature of the times in which the great leaders of the Commons happened to live. The age of the Long Parliament was a religious age. A very lively portrait of the different sects and parties, and their principles of speculation and action, may be seen in Hume, in Millar, and in Clarendon. Now the nature of this religious principle, and its effects on all men, must

serve to excuse the effects which it also produced on the conduct of the members of the Long Parliament.

No further observation is, I think, necessary on this part of the subject. In the authors I have just mentioned you will see all that you may readily conceive; you will see how the religious principle so interfered, as to render all the different parties in the state, not only the king and Laud, but also the members of the Long Parliament, obstinate, unforgiving, and unreasonable, till all the real lovers of their country were buried, with themselves, in a common destruction.

Again, and in the third place, it must be observed, that various incidents occurred of the most untoward nature (the Irish rebellion, for instance), all contributing to mislead those who directed the patriotic party, and to increase the perplexities and calamities of the scene.

But I will mention one circumstance more, in the fourth and last place, to account for the mistakes and faults and unconstitutional proceedings of the Long Parliament. It is this: the conduct of the king himself. This conduct was marked with such a total want of foresight and prudence as made all reasonable system in his opponents impossible. To adopt, for the sake of illustration, a familiar allusion, — you cannot play a game, if your opponent observes not the common rules of it. The student may take, as an instance, his visit to the House of Commons to seize the five members.

Such are the four heads, under some of which may be included all those very peculiar events and circumstances which I conceive should be taken into consideration, when we decide on the blamable proceedings and objectionable temper of the Long Parliament; they will certainly explain and extenuate all, — excuse, perhaps, if not justify, *much* of their conduct: — 1. The inertness of the moderate men; 2. The peculiar nature of the times, and the religious nature of them; 3. The various untoward incidents that occurred, — the Irish rebellion, for example; 4. The totally unreasonable conduct of the king, which made any reasonable system in his opponents so difficult and impossible.

The result of the whole was, that the Parliamentary leaders did not choose to trust the king; and they required from him, for their own security, and the security of the subject (which, it must be observed, was now identified with their own, for, if they had failed, no further resistance could have been again expected), — they required, I say, such concessions as trench on the prerogative of the crown more than any precedents warranted, more than any constitutional view of the subject would have authorized in any ordinary situation of the political system, more than would have been favorable to the interests of England at any subsequent period. The question, therefore, which we have at length to decide, is this: — whether these



leaders were justified in this distrust of the crown, or not ; whether they demanded more than was necessary for their own security, and the security of the constitution, which, as I have before observed, were now identified ; for if they failed, as I must repeat, no subsequent effort could have been expected from others.

And this question ought, in candor, to be argued on the supposition that the king was in reality as deeply impressed with the rights of his prerogative as ever, — as little disposed as ever to rule by Parliaments, if he could do without them, — as little disposed as ever to consider the exertions of the leaders of the Commons in opposition to his authority as any other than disobedience and rebellion, which ought to be punished, according to their various degrees, by fine, imprisonment, or death ; for these are the inferences that may clearly be drawn from his character, his education, and all the speeches and actions of his reign, down to the very period to which we now allude.

But, though this appears nothing more than a fair statement of the case, it does not follow that the Parliamentary leaders should, therefore, not have trusted the king, or should not have thought themselves sufficiently safe and successful, after they had once secured, by law and by his public concessions, such material points as the calling of Parliaments, the right of taxation, and the abolition of the courts of Star-Chamber and High Commission.

We are called upon to examine whether they did not underestimate their own strength, — whether they appear to have considered how great was the victory which they had obtained, — whether they seem to have asked themselves the reason of it, — whether, in short, they did not make the same mistake which is so naturally, so constantly, made by all who engage in contests of this or any other kind, the mistake of never supposing that an opponent has been sufficiently depressed.

The same mistake was made in the late revolution in France. The patriotic party of that country, the leaders of the Constituent Assembly of 1789, could never bring themselves to believe that they were sufficiently secure from the court and their opponents, — that the executive power was sufficiently weakened ; and the same difficulty or error operated, as in our own country, to the destruction of the king and themselves.

It is scarcely to be expected, that, in these dreadful conjunctures of human affairs, this particular mistake should not often be made, — so many are the causes which concur to produce it ; but I think it must be allowed that the mistake was committed by the Parliamentary leaders.

The mistake, however, be it made when it may, is sure to be attended by the most fatal effects. The old system, which those who have loved their country meant only to improve, is inevitably destroyed ; and the early patriots, the men of sense and virtue, are

overwhelmed in the general calamity. They have grasped the pillars of the temple; the temple falls, and, like the strong man of holy writ, they bury in the ruins themselves as well as their opponents.

After all, there can be no doubt, that, if the question had been a question of prerogative and privilege only, the proceedings of the Commons would have been far more, and perhaps sufficiently, moderate and constitutional; but the misfortune was, that these dissensions were not merely of a civil, but also of a religious nature. How and to what extent they were of a religious nature should now be explained to you.

But here, as at every moment during these particular lectures on the times of Charles the First and the Commonwealth, I could wish the pages of Hume and Millar quite present to your minds. It is very disagreeable to me to be so conscious as I must be, that I am leaving great blanks behind me, as I go on; it is like exhibiting to you the anatomy of the human form, by way of a portrait. I comfort myself with believing that Hume and Millar are books which you cannot but read, and you will then see how impossible it would have been for me, on the one side, to have discussed any topics but those they have selected, and yet, on the other, how impossible to have given here from their works any extracts sufficiently copious, — their reasonings are so many, so beautiful, and so weighty. On this present occasion, for instance, you can only in their writings find a masterly and adequate exhibition of the religious as well as civil nature of this contest; the different sects, their views, mistakes, and merits.

I can simply mention here, what you must from this time remember, that there were, more particularly, four different descriptions of religious opinion, — the Roman Catholics, the members of the Church of England, the Presbyterians, and, lastly, the Independents; that, of the four descriptions of religious opinion that existed in the country at the time, the Presbyterians and Independents were naturally separated from those of the Roman Catholic and Church of England communion; and, however differing from each other in the most important points, were united in their common hatred to the hierarchy, and in their common wish for a form of worship more simple than that established; at all events, they were both resolved to have no bishops.

As Charles and Laud could not be satisfied unless they attempted to introduce Episcopacy into Scotland, the Puritanical interest in England thought their labors and patriotism in the House of Commons imperfect, unless they, in like manner, improved, according to their own particular notions, the church government of England. In their debates, therefore, their petitions and their remonstrances to the king, instead of finding the great principles of civil government, and those *only*, insisted upon, we are totally fatigued and overpower-



ed by eternal complaints and invectives against Popish priests, the non-execution of penal laws, diabolical plots, and malignant counselors. It is not only Strafford that is impeached, but also Laud; it is not only the right of the Commons to concur in the taxation of the people that is to be asserted, but the bishops are to have no vote in the House of Lords; and when the mobs assemble about the doors of the houses of Parliament, the streets resound, not with the cry of Parliament and privilege, but of "No Popish prelates, no rotten-hearted lords;" &c., &c.; and it is not corrupt counsellors or arbitrary judges, but it is the *bishops*, that escape with difficulty from the fury of this theological populace. We must therefore consider whether the Long Parliament would have acted as they did in any ordinary state of their minds and feelings, — whether the king would have found it so difficult to satisfy, at least to appease them, — whether their jealousy would have been so sensitive, their dissatisfaction so constant, their complaints so ceaseless, captious, and unreasonable, if they had not been, in a word, sectarians as well as patriots.

The celebrated Remonstrance which was at last presented to the king, and was so fitted by its tedious ill-humor to drive him to any possible extremity, was with great difficulty carried, and if it had not been carried, Cromwell told Lord Falkland he would have quitted the kingdom: that is, in other words, this manifesto, upon which subsequent events so materially turned, was vitally dear to the Independents; and would probably not have been proposed, much less voted, if the great constitutional question of prerogative and privilege had not been interwoven with others of a theological nature, — questions by which, it unfortunately happens, that the minds of men may at any time be exasperated and embittered to any possible degree of fury and absurdity. It remains, therefore, to consider, lastly, how far the Presbyterians are to be censured for this, their resolution to have the government altered in church as well as in state.

Those among ourselves, living in a subsequent age, who have been properly enlightened by the past, who not only see the duty of mutual tolerance, but act upon it, and who do not think it necessary that our own particular notions in religion or politics should be established and made to take the lead, merely because we believe them true, — those of us who so properly understand the principles of Christianity and the duties of civilized society, such of us, if any there be, may perhaps have some little right to censure the Presbyterian faction. But no such censure could be exercised, at that unhappy period, by any of the actors in the scene; — not by Charles himself, nor Laud, nor the Episcopalian party, for they had attempted the same in Scotland; not by any church or sect then existing, for it was an age of religious wars and mutual persecution.

In our moral criticisms, therefore, on the parties of these times, when we are speaking, it is to be remembered, not of the early

patriots, but of the members of the Long Parliament, we have some, and yet but little, preference to make. Charles and the Episcopalians were guilty of the first act of hostility, — at least, of the first violent, and even cruel proceedings, — the Presbyterians, of urging their victory too far. If Charles and Laud had succeeded, the civil and religious liberties of England would have perished; and subsequently the Presbyterians could not succeed, but by such measures as rendered a civil war inevitable. It may be possible to determine which alternative is the worst, but mankind can have no greater enemies than those who reduce them to either.

Charles was guilty of a great want of political sagacity, in not perceiving the growing strength of the Commons, and, when he saw the increasing number of the sectaries, in not considering well the cautious and moderate system which he was to adopt when such men were to be opposed to his designs.

But the Presbyterians, in like manner, seem inexcusable for not taking into their account the growing strength and the increasing numbers of the Independents. The most violent of the Presbyterians had no intention to overthrow the monarchy. But when they ceased to act *on a system of accommodation* with the king, they exposed every thing to the ultimate decision of violence. They might themselves wish only for a limited monarchy, and for presbyters in the Church instead of bishops; but a set of men remained behind them, the Independents, indisposed to all monarchy and ecclesiastical government whatever; and they were guilty of the fault, either of not properly observing the numbers and tenets of such men, or of not perceiving, that, if they urged their differences with the king to the decision of the sword, or even to the immediate chance of it, men of this violent, unreasonable character must multiply, and be produced by the very urgencies of the times, and could not fail of ultimately overpowering the king, the Parliament, and all who differed with them.

It must at the same time be confessed, that it is the great misfortune of all critical periods like these, that parties cannot very immediately be distinguished from each other. They advance together under the same standards to a certain point, and then, and not before, they separate and take different directions; and as fury and absurdity are sure to be the most relished by the multitude, and at some time or other to have the ascendant, moderate men perceive not *in time*, that, on public as well as on private grounds, there is more danger to be apprehended from many of those who appear to *go along* with them than from those who are their visible, decided, and declared opponents.

Observations of this kind have been again illustrated by the late revolution in France, and may therefore seem to indicate principles in human nature, that on such dreadful occasions will always exhibit themselves.



The vote of the Remonstrance is an epoch in this calamitous contest. The Commons are not to be justified in presenting this Remonstrance, nor to be justified in their subsequent measures. It may be very true, that their proceedings, till the king's departure into Scotland in 1641, with the exception of Lord Strafford's attainder, and perhaps the vote for their own continuance, were (more particularly in the more early periods of the contest) most laudable and patriotic, but that they never were so afterwards. They had obtained all the great points necessary to the constitution; and the king told them in June, when he had finished his concessions by taking away the courts of Star-Chamber and High Commission, and with reason told them, that, if they would consider what he had done in that Parliament, "discontent would not sit in their hearts." "I hope you remember," he added, "I have granted that the judges hereafter shall hold their places, *quamdiu bene se gesserint*; I have bounded the forests; . . . . I have established the property of the subject; . . . . I have established, by act of Parliament, the property of the subject in tonnage and poundage; . . . . I have granted a law for a triennial Parliament; . . . . I have given free course of justice against delinquents; I have put the laws in execution against Papists; nay, I have given way to every thing that you have asked of me, and therefore, methinks, you should not wonder, if, in some things, I begin to refuse: . . . . I will not stick upon trivial matters, to give you content."

I would therefore fix the attention of the student on the famous Remonstrance, and the proceedings relating to it, as the particular point where his opinion must, as I conceive, begin most materially to alter. After this celebrated Remonstrance, the papers on each side (which were, in fact, appeals to the people, as was, indeed, the Remonstrance itself) become very voluminous, and will somewhat overpower you. Some general idea must be formed of them by some sort of general perusal; but the king's cause may, from this time, be rested on this very Remonstrance alone, a paper drawn up by the Parliament itself, and quite decisive of the comparative merits of the king and the House of Commons, from the moment that it was delivered.

Once more, therefore, and finally, to recall to your minds what I conceive are the points of this great question. During the first interval of four years, the conduct of the king seems infatuated and highly reprehensible; and during the second interval of eleven years, even more and more to be reprobated, I had almost said to be abhorred. During the third interval, of little more than a year, the blame still remains with the king, and the praise with the Commons;—clearly, however, with one exception, the execution of Strafford; and perhaps with another, their vote for their own continuance. During the fourth interval, however, from the journey to Scotland in August,

1641, to the commencement of hostilities, the Commons, in their turn, became wrong ; but the question of their conduct is still *for some time*, in the opinion of many, somewhat difficult ; the question is, whether they were pushing their victory too far, or only securing their ground. Hyde decided one way, and Hampden another ; and perhaps the student may, at this distance of time, and after the event, on the whole perceive that Hyde was the more rational patriot of the two.

I have thus proposed, not to your acquiescence, but to your examination, such general conclusions upon the different intervals which I have selected as the transactions which they exhibit appeared to me fairly to suggest. But these transactions were so numerous, yet all so important, that not only was it impossible for me to give any detail of them, but it was impossible to state all the observations to which they successively gave rise, even in my own mind. What alone I have been able to offer to your consideration has been general results, founded on such observations. I would recommend a similar course to each of my hearers : let such reflections as strike him, while he reads the history, be immediately noted down at the time ; let the whole chain be then surveyed, and general results and estimates formed ; otherwise the *later* impressions which the mind receives, in the course of the perusal, will have an effect more than proportionate to their comparative weight and importance. Do not turn away from investigations of this nature. There are those, no doubt, who proceed not in this manner, — practical men, men of the world, and respectable and even laborious writers : with them every thing on the one side is right, and on the other is wrong. This is not the way, in my opinion, to read history. It is not the way to judge of our fellow-creatures, or to improve ourselves.

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## LECTURE XVI.

### THE CIVIL WAR.

IN my last two lectures I offered to your consideration the results of such observations as had occurred to me on the great contest that subsisted between the king and Parliament prior to the breaking out of the Civil War, more particularly with regard to their comparative merits and demerits.

The military transactions of the Civil War that ensued may be



collected from Hume, and still more in the detail from Clarendon. In the former author will also be found a philosophic estimate of the strength and resources of the contending parties, and of their separate probabilities of success. Disquisitions of this kind, more particularly from such an author, are highly deserving of your attention. The entertainment and instruction of history can never be properly felt or understood, as I cannot too often remark, unless you meditate upon the existing circumstances of the scene, suppose them before you, and estimate the probabilities that they present; then marking the events that really take place, thus derive a sort of experience in the affairs of mankind, which may enable you to determine with greater precision and success, on occasions when you may yourselves be called upon to act a part, and when the happiness of your country and your own may, more or less, be affected by the propriety of your decisions. Materials for such disquisitions, and such exercise of the judgment, are often supplied by Clarendon, and they constitute, indeed, one material and appropriate part of the value of all original writers of history. In original writers, the real scene is presented to you in colors more vivid and more exact.

The king seems to have been every way unfortunate. With sufficient courage and ability to make him the proper general of his own forces, he was still not possessed of that military genius which is fitted to triumph over difficulties, which can turn to its own purposes the dispositions of men and the opportunities and unsuspected advantages of every situation, which can seem by these means to control the decisions of chance and to command success. That a soldier, however, of this description should arise against him on the popular side was to be expected; a captain like Cromwell was sure to appear, at least to exist, in the ranks of his opponents. But that such a general as Fairfax should be found among the men of distinction in the country, and yet be opposed to his cause, this might surely be considered by the king as a hard dispensation of fortune; still harder, if it be considered that Fairfax was, of all men that history presents, the most fitted for the purposes of a soldier like Cromwell: too honest to have criminal designs of his own; too magnanimous to suspect them in those around him; superior to every other in the field; inferior in the cabinet; enthusiastic enough to be easily deceived, but not enough to be a hypocrite and to deceive others.

The character of Cromwell seems the natural production of the times, though, it must be confessed, the most complete specimen of their influence that can well be imagined; still, the character itself consists but of the common materials, — courage, fierceness, decisive sense, clear sagacity, and strong ambition; all, no doubt, given in a very eminent degree, added to such qualities as resulted from an age of religious dispute; and the whole nourished and drawn out in the most extraordinary manner, by the temptations and urgencies of a

revolutionary period. Hampden early predicted his future eminence, on one supposition, — the breaking out of a civil war.

From the moment that the sword was drawn, all wise and good men must, with Lord Falkland, have been overpowered with the most afflicting expectations. One of two alternatives, equally painful, could alone have occurred to them as probable : either that the king would conquer, and the privileges of the subject, and all future defence of them, be swept away in his triumph ; or that the Parliament would prevail, and the result be, that the whole government, for want of some proper constitutional head, would fall into the disposal of the army, and be seized upon by some of its great captains, to the total degradation, and probably to the destruction, of the existing monarch, — perhaps even of the ancient forms of monarchy itself.

I must leave you to examine for yourselves the various events of the Civil War, — the military operations in the field, and the transactions in Parliament, — all of them very interesting. They may be found in the regular historians (particularly Clarendon), and in the accounts that have come down to us of the debates in the Long Parliament. I can only make a few observations on some of the leading transactions, chiefly those of a civil nature.

Among other objects of attention, the Self-denying Ordinance should be noticed. On this occasion, the parties came to issue, — the Presbyterians and Independents ; the one, who wished for Presbytery and monarchy ; the other, who had abandoned themselves to their own imaginary schemes of perfection in religion and government ; most of them, probably, without any settled notions in either. Violence and enthusiasm, the great banes of all public assemblies in times of disorder, at last prevailed, and the Self-denying Ordinance was carried. By this ordinance, the members of both houses were excluded from all the important civil and military employments. The Presbyterians, who were in power, were, by this contrivance, obliged to resign it. Yet, when the evasion of the ordinance by Cromwell is also considered, a more barefaced political expedient cannot easily be imagined. The very idea of it, not to say the success of it, as described by Lord Clarendon, and as seen in the speeches and subsequent conduct of Cromwell, who contrived to elude it and retain his command, is quite characteristic of this strange period of our history. It was, in truth, an expedient to clear the army from all the more moderate men who were then in command.

After the Self-denying Ordinance, the treaty of Uxbridge must be considered as the next principal object of attention. The proceedings are very fully detailed by an actor in the scene, Lord Clarendon ; and as this was quite a crisis in the contest, the question is, when the negotiation did not lead to accommodation and peace, Which party was in fault ? To me, I confess, the conclusion from the whole seems to be, that the Presbyterians were in fault, and that



they cannot be forgiven for not closing with the king immediately on the terms which he proposed, not merely from a sense of propriety and justice, but from the apprehension with which Cromwell and the Independents ought to have inspired them. It even appears, from a curious conference mentioned by Whitelocke, which was held one night at Essex House, *before* the Self-denying Ordinance had been moved in the House, that Cromwell was already dreaded; yet no danger, no distress, could produce any reasonable effect either on the Presbyterians in Parliament or on the king. Religious considerations had, unhappily, interfered to make what was difficult impossible. The king could not entirely give up Episcopacy, and the Presbyterians, with still more of theological infatuation, were determined to have their Presbytery exclusively established. All hopes of accommodation were at an end. "Most sober men," says Whitelocke, "lamented the sudden breach of the treaty."

The victory of Naseby followed, and the cause of the king was desperate. This is, again, a sort of epoch in this contest. Charles, not possessed of the genius that can sometimes make even a desperate cause at last triumphant, repaired, without speculating very long or reasonably upon the consequences, to the Scotch army. The Scotch army could discover, in their new situation, no better course to pursue than at all events to make the king a means of procuring their arrears from the English Parliament, and to barter the person of their sovereign for the money that was due to them. It might be thought that a common question of account might have been settled by the godly (so they termed themselves), on each side of the Tweed, on the usual principles of arithmetic and honesty, — certainly without so unusual a transfer as the person of their monarch; but not so: it was in this manner, it seems, that the differences between the two parties could best be adjusted. The bargain was settled, the king was delivered up, and the Scotch retired to their own country. Their posterity have ever since been ashamed of this coarse and disgraceful transaction, for, after every explanation of it, such it is; and if the English were ashamed also, they would do themselves no injustice.

From this period we must be occupied in observing the mistakes and faults of the king and the Presbyterians on the one side, the guilt of Cromwell and the Independents on the other.

In the first place, we must cast our eyes on the conduct of the army. The scene that by reasonable men must have been long expected now opened. The army, having no enemy to contend with in the field, began, under the direction of Cromwell, to control the Parliament, the Presbyterians. The proceedings of an armed body of men like this, on such an occasion, are, unhappily, but too deserving of our very particular observation.

But the conduct of the Presbyterians, and of those in the House

who meant well, continued as injudicious as ever. The soldiers had real cause of complaint, and the Parliament made the usual mistake of all regular assemblies, when dealing with irregular combinations of men: they did not take care, in the first place, to do them justice; they did not take care, as soon as possible, to put themselves entirely in the right; they were, as usual, too proud to be wise; they therefore, no doubt, gave Cromwell and those who meant ill every advantage. They even committed other mistakes still more unpardonable, by sending down to the army Cromwell and the very incendiaries themselves to compose differences. When the Parliament became more reasonable and just, it was, as is usually the case, too late.

And now was the season when the king was to commit *his* political mistakes. While he was, in fact, at the disposal and in the hands of the army, he had to deal with the Parliament and the Presbyterian faction and the Scotch Covenanters, as one party, — with the army and Independents, as another. There is something of doubt hangs over the intentions of Cromwell and the army on this occasion, — whether they really meant to support the king, and restore him to his constitutional authority, or not. Sir John Berkley's Memoirs speak of a very fair and reasonable negotiation on their part. His account may be found also incorporated into the history of Ludlow. Clarendon seems not to think much of the importance of this negotiation; but he did not like Berkley. It is on the whole, however, plain, that Charles unfortunately supposed he should, in the existing situation of the parties of the state, be called in as an umpire; many prudent men, according to Lord Clarendon, expected the same; and in this fatal indecision and vain wish to keep well with all descriptions of men, Charles could not be properly trusted by any, least of all by men violent and decided like Cromwell and Ireton. Charles was no controller of circumstances and of the minds of others, and no discernor of characters and opportunities. He made no advantage of his situation, and insensibly approached his scaffold, not his throne.

The last specimen of political infatuation in the Presbyterians and the king yet remained, — their conduct during the treaty in the Isle of Wight: another important point of attention. The army had, in the most illegal manner, interfered with the Parliament, had become their masters, and perfectly tyrannized over them. In this state of things, insurrections in favor of the king appeared in different parts of the kingdom; and a regular attempt was made by the Scotch with all their forces in favor of him and of the Parliament. For one precious interval, therefore, the Presbyterians were relieved from the domination of Cromwell and the army, who were sent to put down these insurgents. As the Presbyterians were all of them attached to a monarchical form of government, there was once more a possibility of a conciliation between them and the king. Cromwell and his army



were employed, and at such a distance that they could give no interruption. A treaty was begun, but no adequate progress was made, — no progress, till the army returned, — returned triumphant, and with all their counsels of violence and guilt: the opportunity of peace was lost for ever.

The question, then, is here, as before in the treaty of Uxbridge, Was the king or the Parliament most in fault? The great load of political folly, even of moral criminality, must fall upon the Parliament; for their terms were abominably unfeeling and unjust. In consequence of the pertinacious, dilatory, impolitic conduct of the Presbyterians, before the king's final propositions for peace could be adjusted and debated, Cromwell and the army had marched to the metropolis, and every member of the House who delivered an opinion consonant to right and justice, and favorable to any accommodation with the king, did it at the hazard of imprisonment and death.

In this calamitous state of things, the famous Prynne rose up in his place, and delivered a speech in defence of the king's answers to the propositions of Parliament. Long as it is, I cannot but recommend it to an entire and attentive perusal. Allowance must be made for the violence of the author's prejudices in favor of Presbytery and against Popery, and when this allowance has been made, it will be found that a train of persuasion more fairly drawn out and more clearly conducted to effect a particular purpose has seldom been produced before a public assembly. You will see it in Cobbett. Certainly a more striking exhibition of principle never occurred. Prynne was speaking in an assembly overawed by soldiers, in a situation that might have made a Roman shrink. Every reason that could irritate the heart of man concurred to render him inveterate against the king. He had to preface his arguments with relating what he had endured from him. He said, that at two different times he had suffered mutilations in the most barbarous manner (these are specimens, it is to be observed, of the conduct of Charles and Laud, — note them); that he had been set upon three several pillories; that his licensed books had been burnt before his face by the hangman; that *two* fines, each of five thousand pounds, (what a sum in those days!) had been imposed upon him; that he had been expelled out of the Inns of Court and the University of Oxford, and degraded in both; that he had lost his calling almost nine years' space; that his books had been seized, and his estate; that he had been eight years imprisoned in several prisons; that four of these years had been spent in close imprisonment and exile, at Caernarvon and in the Isle of Jersey, where he was debarred the use of pen, ink, paper, and all books almost but the Bible, without the least access of any friend, or any allowance of diet for his support; — and all this for his good service to the state in opposing Popery and regal tyranny.

Yet did this virtuous man continue to reason out his conclusion,

hour after hour, with the most patient and penetrating sagacity, — continue to show himself superior alike to the meanness of fear from Cromwell and the soldiers, and the remembrance of all the ferocious insults and all the abominable pains and penalties which he had endured from Charles and his advisers ; in defiance of all, he continued to enforce upon the House, by the exertion of every faculty he could command, his own upright declaration, that they were bound in honor, prudence, justice, and conscience, to proceed upon the king's propositions to the speedy settlement of the peace of the kingdom.

Still further to the credit of human nature, it is to be mentioned, that this speech had a most clear and positive effect, — that many members were converted to his side, — that his opinion prevailed, and would probably have prevailed by a far larger majority, if nearly one third of the House, from age and infirmities, had not been obliged to retire. The debate had lasted without intermission for a day and a night.

The subsequent events are but too well known. Cromwell and the army sent Colonel Pride to clear the House of all who were disposed to an accommodation with the king. The public execution of the sovereign followed.

This cruel and dreadful outrage has given occasion to much reasoning with respect to the nature of government, and the original grounds of civil obedience. No subject can be more interesting, and it may very properly employ your meditations when you arrive at an event so afflicting and so awful as the public execution, in the midst of a civilized community, of the great and high magistrate of the realm.

On such a subject, the observations of such a writer as Hume will naturally engage your attention. "Government," says this philosophic historian, "is instituted in order to restrain the fury and injustice of the people ; and being always founded on opinion, not on force, it is dangerous to weaken the reverence which the multitude owe to authority. . . . . The doctrine of obedience ought alone to be inculcated, and the exceptions, which are rare, ought seldom or never to be mentioned in popular reasonings and discourses. Nor is there any danger that mankind, by this prudent reserve, should universally degenerate into a state of abject servitude. When the exception really occurs, . . . . it must, from its very nature, be so obvious and undisputed, as to remove all doubt, and overpower the restraint, however great, imposed by teaching the general doctrine of obedience. But between resisting a prince and dethroning him there is a wide interval, . . . . and between dethroning a prince and punishing him there is another very wide interval. . . . . We stand astonished, that, among a civilized people, so much virtue [as was possessed by Charles] could ever meet with so fatal a catastrophe."

To this weighty reasoning something must be added (and it is not added by the historian), or the discussion of this subject will surely be left most materially imperfect. Government is, no doubt, insti-



tuted for the restraint of the people, but it is also instituted for the promotion of their happiness; and while obedience is the duty that should be inculcated on the people, resistance is the doctrine that should be ever present to the rulers. There may be intervals between resisting, dethroning, and executing a sovereign, and the last may be an extremity which ought never to be supposed possible; but there is a wide interval, in like manner, between rational obedience and servile submission; and though rational obedience be necessary to all human society, servile submission is inconsistent with all its purposes and enjoyments. No people can long be happy that do not reverence authority; but no governors will long do their duty who do not respect the public.

"Obedience," says Mr. Hume, "is the doctrine to be alone inculcated; nor is there any danger that mankind should degenerate into a state of servitude: when the exception occurs, it will overpower the restraint imposed by the general doctrine." But is no resistance to begin till such extremes of oppression arise as create an exception to all general rules? If such is to be the nature of resistance and obedience, as Mr. Hume seems to suppose, it will then be found, that resistance, when it does come, has come too late, — it will then be found that the people can seldom resist their governors without fatally injuring themselves.

This, therefore, is neither the resistance nor the obedience that is wanted, and something very different from either must be generated by some means or other in a community, or the great political problem of the public happiness and security is neither solved, nor its solution in any reasonable degree even approached. It can be solved only by one expedient. Some power of criticism must be given to the people upon the conduct of their rulers, — must be introduced into the political system, to be so reasonably and yet so constantly exercised, that it shall be respected in time by those rulers, and be so taken into their account, while they are forming their measures, that it shall always have an effective tendency to render their proceedings sufficiently agreeable to the public good. Some power of criticism like this, if by any machinery of government, by representative assemblies for instance, it can be made to exist, can never exist without being a cause of the most complete improvement and advantage to both parties, — to those who are to command, and to those who are to obey. The constitution of a country, therefore, is good exactly in proportion as it supplies this power of peaceable, yet operative, criticism; it cannot be good without it; and the reasons for civil obedience are so many and so powerful, that the rulers of mankind are always secure in their honors and their situation while they administer the high office which they bear with any tolerable portion of wisdom and integrity.

The character of Charles has been drawn by the first masters, and

may now be considered as sufficiently understood. The truth is, that his situation at successive periods of his reign was so different, that we view him with sentiments the most different, though his character was always intrinsically the same. He is no object of our affection and respect, but of reprehension, and almost of contempt, while we observe him in the early part of his life, though a prince destined for empire, finding the friend of his bosom in Buckingham, the unworthy favorite of his father, without capacity as a minister, or virtue as a man.

For the first few years after his accession, his conduct is fitted to create in us only very warm disapprobation, strong dislike of his measures, and suspicion of his intentions. Afterwards, from the year 1629 to 1640, while endeavouring to rule without Parliaments, he appears before us in no other light but in that of a prince of narrow mind and arbitrary nature; incapable of respecting the civil and religious liberties of his country; hurrying on to the destruction of them; and the proper object of our unequivocal hatred and indignation.

These emotions, however, gradually subside, soon after the meeting of the Long Parliament, as he gradually relinquishes, though by compulsion, the dangerous prerogatives he had attempted to establish. But when a still further change of situation takes place, and when the Parliament, in its turn, becomes unreasonable and bigoted, his offences are forgotten, for he ceases to be the offender; and as we begin to dislike the Parliament, he is necessarily considered, first with complacency, and then with favor.

But yet another change, still more affecting, is to be witnessed; and we do not deny him, we willingly offer him, our esteem, when we survey him at last supporting with firmness and courage in the field the honor of his crown against men whom it was impossible to satisfy by any fair concessions in the cabinet. Once more are our sentiments altered; and this esteem is softened into kindness when his fortunes lower, when the battle of Naseby is lost, and when the sword which he has drawn in vain must be at last thrown down and abandoned.

But scenes still more gloomy and affecting are to be opened. He is to be a monarch "fallen from his high estate"; he is to fly he knows not whither; to try expedients without hope, and plans without a meaning; to negotiate with his conquerors; to be called upon to proscribe his friends, and to stigmatize his own cause; to be required by formal treaty, and in the face of the world and of posterity, to be his own accuser, — his own accuser, and the accuser of every thing he holds venerable and dear; to be passed from prison to prison, and from enemy to enemy. We are to see him solitary and friendless; his "gray discrowned head," with none to reverence it; and, alone and unprotected, left to expostulate with enthusiasts, no



longer within the reach of the common workings of our nature, or with ferocious soldiers, who call aloud, they know not why, for justice and execution, arraign him before a court of their own formation, and proclaim him a traitor to his country and the murderer of his people!

With what sentiments are we now to behold him? With our former suspicions and dislike, indignation and terror? Is it Charles that is before us, — the friend of Buckingham, — the patron of Laud, — the opponent of Hampden, — the corrupter, the encourager, the deserter of Strafford, — the dissolver of Parliaments, — the imposer of liturgies, — the violator of privileges? These are images of the past no longer to be recalled; these are characters of offence with which he has now no concern. It is the monarch unsubdued by adversity, — it is the hero unappalled by death, — it is the Christian sublimed by piety and hope, — it is these that occupy our imagination and our memory. It is the tribunal of violence, it is the scaffold of blood, that banish from our minds all indignation but against his destroyers, all terrors but of the licentiousness of the people, — that render all regular estimation of his character odious and impossible, and that leave nothing in the heart of the generous and humane but compassion for his misfortunes and reverence for his virtues.

Sentiments like these, so natural at any period, so powerful at the time as to have produced almost his deification, it is not the province of true philosophy to destroy, but rather to temper and enlighten. It is turning history to no adequate purpose, if we do not accept the instruction which it offers. The lives and actions of men have been in vain exhibited to our view, if we make not our moral criticisms, even when to make them is a task painful and repulsive to our nature. The early part of the reign of Charles must be remembered, as well as the close, — the obscure as well as the brighter parts of his imperfect character. His faults should be studied, that there never may again be a necessity for the display of his virtues. Those faults were the faults of all those sovereigns who, though men of principle, have involved themselves and their country in calamities. Such sovereigns have always wanted, as did Charles, that simplicity and steadiness which could afford good men the means of understanding and depending upon their conduct, — that enlightened benevolence which could make them think more of their people than of themselves, — that magnanimity which might enable them to call to their councils statesmen who would announce to them the real sentiments of the community, not echo and confirm their own, — and lastly, and above all, that political sagacity which could discern the signs of the times, the new opinions that had arisen, and which could draw forth, with equal wisdom and benevolence, such principles of improvement as the constitution of the country contained, and adapt

ing them, according to the justice of the case, ere it was too late, to the ever-shifting scene before them, save the state and themselves alike from the fury of the passions of the people and the treachery of their own.

At the conclusion of these remarks on the contest between Charles and his Parliaments, it may not be amiss to observe that there are two mistakes which are continually made, though it is not very intelligible how they can be made by those who are at all acquainted with the history of these times. First, the execution of Charles is always reasoned upon as if it had received the sanction of a regular Parliament, as if it had been a great national act; but nothing can be farther from the truth. On the 4th of the preceding December, (the king was executed on the 30th of January,) there were present in the House, as Mr. Prynne informs us, three hundred and forty members. Two days after, Cromwell and his soldiers expelled nearly a hundred and imprisoned nearly fifty, so that the next day, such was the general terror, only seventy-three met, and after that day never more than fifty-three. It was by this inconsiderable part of a House, to which more than five hundred members originally belonged, that all the outrageous proceedings against the king and the constitution of the country were resolved upon, and never more than fifty-three members could be collected. Not more than forty members of the House signed the death-warrant of Charles. Only fifty-eight commissioners could be brought to sign it, out of a court consisting of about one hundred and fifty. Of these one hundred and fifty, not more than seventy could ever be brought to sit, though recourse was had to the officers of the army, and though the country had been for five years inured to all the disorders of a civil war, and to the influence of every passion and every principle of civil and religious hate that can render men barbarous and unjust; only seventy could be found capable of acting. In the House of Lords, not a single peer could be found to countenance these proceedings of the soldiery; and the assembly expired with their sovereign.

The second mistake which has been made with respect to these extraordinary times is more excusable. The Presbyterians have always been accused as the destroyers of the monarchy. This is not accurate. The Long Parliament originally consisted of five hundred and thirty-four members; one hundred and seventy-five of them (Hyde one of them) left the House, and repaired to the king at Oxford. On the whole, in the progress of the dispute, two hundred out of the original five hundred and thirty-four were disabled, and new writs issued. Those that remained must, therefore, have been all Presbyterians and Independents, almost to a man.

Now, from all the speeches and proceedings and memoirs of the times, it appears, that these two parties continued in the House almost to the last, and that the former at least, the Presbyterians,



though they were resolved to have the Episcopal form of church government altered, never had the least intention of abolishing the monarchy. A king limited by law, and a church without bishops, these were their objects, and no other. More than half a year before the execution of the king, the leading Presbyterian members of the House, eleven in number, the famous Holles at their head, men that had been the most distinguished through the whole of the contest, were impeached, and, in fact, driven from the House by the menaces of the soldiery and the Independent party. They had been found in the way, when designs of violence and usurpation began to be entertained. The speech of Prynne, to which I have alluded, delivered only two months before the execution of the king, shows clearly what were the sentiments of the Presbyterians to the last. He was one of them.

In Scotland, a large party of the Presbyterians appeared in arms, and resolved to march into England against the army, in defence of the Parliament and the royal cause. If the king could have subscribed the Covenant, the whole of that part of the island would have united in his favor.

The Memoirs of Holles are very decisive on this point, particularly at the close. They are worth reading, are not long, and strongly paint the rage and disappointment of a man of ability and principle, at seeing his party (the Presbyterian party) overpowered by men of hypocrisy and blood, like Cromwell and his associates, and the labors of his own life thus ending in total despair. It is in this book that there is the remarkable charge brought against Cromwell of cowardice. Holles was one of the members who had forcibly held the Speaker in the chair in the year 1628; and, in 1641, was one of the five members whom the king had meant to arrest, when he so unhappily entered the House for the purpose.

Even Walker, in his History of Independency, though indulging himself in the most unlimited censures of both parties as to money concerns, speaks of the Independents (page 200, part ii.) as men who "carried on the war against the king with an intent, from the beginning, to pull down monarchy and set up anarchy; *notwithstanding*," continues he, "the many declarations, remonstrances, abortive treaties, protestations, and covenants to the contrary, which were *obligations* from time to time *extorted* from them by the Presbyterians."

The accusation, therefore, of the Presbyterians seems to be, not that they intended to overthrow the monarchy, but that they committed political mistakes which enabled others to do so. Their fault seems rather to have been of a religious nature,—their terror of Popery, their hatred of bishops, their religious intolerance, carried, indeed, to a most senseless and disgusting excess. Much of this blame must, however, be shared by the king himself; and if his intolerance was more pardonable, because Episcopacy was already

established, and because his religious persuasions were not debased by cant and grimace, and were of a more liberal and sober nature, still his political mistakes were far greater than those of the Presbyterians, and both his religious and political mistakes (which is a most important point) were prior in order of time.

The most violent philippics that ever appeared against this party may be found in the *Prose Works* of Milton. The invectives of this great poet against prelates and Presbyterians will perfectly astonish those who as yet are conversant only with his immortal work, his descriptions of the Garden of Eden, and the piety and innocence of our first parents.

This period of the Civil Wars — the most interesting in our history — has given occasion to so many publications, that there is some danger lest the student should be overwhelmed by the extent and variety of his materials. In *Rushworth* he will find an inexhaustible collection of important documents. These should be consulted, and compared with the collection of *Nelson*, who professes to correct his faults. The *Works of King Charles*, published by *Royston*, should be looked at, particularly the king's letters taken at *Naseby*. When any doubt is entertained of the conduct of Charles, *Mrs. Macaulay* may be referred to, and a charge against him, if it can possibly be made out, will assuredly be found, and supported with all the references that the most animated diligence can supply. These may be compared with the representations of *Clarendon* and his defenders. A general summary of the particulars of this reign, not very favorable to the king, will be found in *Harris's Life of Charles the First*. *Harris* fortifies the positions in his text, like *Bayle*, by copious notes, which will, at least, bring the subject, and all the learning that belongs to it, in full review before the reader. There is a *History of the Long Parliament*, by *May*, which is not without its value, though, from the shortness of the period which it embraces, and the cold and general manner in which it is written, it will disappoint the reader, who might naturally expect much more curious matter from one who was secretary to the House, and wrote from the midst of such unprecedented scenes. *Clarendon* is always interesting, and continually provides materials for the statesman and the philosopher. He is partial, no doubt; but, as it has been well observed by *Lord Grenville*, in his preface to the late *Lord Chatham's Letters* (a preface which is worth reading, even with a reference to our present subject), the partiality of one who means to tell the truth will always be distinguishable from his who means to deceive. The *Memoirs of Holles* I have already mentioned; and the *History of Independency*, by *Walker*, should be looked into. But books like these last two cannot be at all understood, unless a knowledge of the history has previously been obtained. *Whitelocke's journal* is a collection of facts, with occasional disquisitions, very short and very few, but always very inter-



esting and important. It must, by all means, be looked over in conjunction with the more regular narrative of other historians.

On the whole, with regard to books, I may say, that the Parliamentary History, or Cobbett's edition of it, should form the groundwork of the student's perusal; and that this, with the explanations and comments of Hume and Clarendon on the one side, and Millar and Rapin on the other, will leave him little further to seek, if he will but sufficiently meditate on the materials thus supplied to his reflections. Rapin is always full and valuable, and a sort of substitute in the absence of all other writers.

Finally, I must remind you that I have already mentioned the great work of Mr. Hallam and the very important Memoirs of Charles the First by Miss Aikin. These lectures were written many years ago, but I have thus been enabled, I hope, the better to estimate the interest and value of these late publications.

When the king had perished on the scaffold, the Independents and the army alone remained to triumph. All other parties — the Royalists and moderate patriots with Lord Falkland and Hyde, the Presbyterians with Holles — had been swept away from the field. We are now, therefore, to observe what was the conduct of the Independents, and what of Cromwell and the army.

Those of the Independents who were not mere wild or drivelling fanatics were Republicans, like Ludlow and Hutchinson; and it was now their business to establish their Commonwealth. Hume accuses them of wanting that deep thought and those comprehensive views which might qualify them for acting the part of legislators. This may be true. But it seems impossible, even at this distance of time, to propose any system of conduct which could have enabled them to carry their political theories into execution. They were now, at last, themselves to pay the penalty of all their violence and enthusiasm.

The great difficulty which the Presbyterians had not been able to overcome remained, — the army, — a difficulty now equally invincible to the Republicans. A general like Cromwell, and men like his soldiers, were not likely to acquiesce in any system of government which materially abridged their power; and unless their power was abridged, there could be no peace or security for the subject, under any form of government, monarchical or republican.

The Republicans were themselves only the last residue of the Long Parliament; the sole expedient, therefore, that offered, was the dissolution of this remaining garbled part, and the calling of a new one, fully and regularly chosen. Such a Parliament might have been considered as a fair indication of the public will. But this could not be attempted for some time, after so enormous an act of violence as the king's execution; and whenever attempted, it must have appeared to the Republicans a measure very doubtful in its success, and likely to fill the House with a large majority of concealed

Royalists and exasperated Presbyterians, neither of whom would have tolerated the Independents or the Republic; they therefore temporized, and waited to avail themselves of the chance of events.

But this conduct, though natural, was, after all, neither just nor prudent. It was not just; for, if the political opinions of the nation were against their Republic, they had no right to endeavour to establish it, whether by force or by contrivance. It was not prudent; for Cromwell had already shown himself to be a far greater master of the art of managing events than they could possibly be; and none but the most contemptible enthusiasts could now be ignorant that his hypocrisy was unceasing, his influence with the army unbounded, and his views ambitious. The only possible mode, therefore, of controlling his conduct, or favorably influencing his designs, was the summoning of a regular Parliament, which might attract the respect of every man of principle in the army and in the kingdom.

It is true that even this measure might not have answered to the views of the Republicans, but it was their only chance. To remain as they were, the last remnant that military violence had spared, and therefore respected by no party, — to remain, ready to be overthrown at the first difference that arose between themselves and the army, was certain destruction. In this state, however, the Parliament *did* remain during the first year of their administration, — 1648.

In 1649, Cromwell and the army were employed in Ireland; in 1650, against the Scotch Presbyterians, who had made a very injudicious attempt to restore royalty, or rather the Covenant and royalty, and had persuaded the young king (afterwards Charles the Second) to commit himself, very thoughtlessly, to the disposal of their intolerance and fanaticism. In both these campaigns Cromwell and the army were victorious. In 1651, the young king was defeated at Worcester. This defeat of his enemy was what Cromwell declared to be “the last crowning mercy of the Lord”; that is, it was the finishing step to his own power, and the cause of the Republicans was now more than ever hopeless.

They seem to have had an opportunity in 1649, when Cromwell was in Ireland, to make some effort for the establishment of their civil authority, but they lost it. In the mean time, petitions with respect to the settlement of the nation were continually presented to them. Instead of attending, however, to the public expectations and the duties of their situation, they contented themselves with returning, like other unwise governments, sometimes menaces, punishments, and statutes of high treason, sometimes plausible answers to gain time, and occasionally debating the question of their dissolution and of a new representation; but, on the whole, coming to no decision on the subject, while it was their best policy to do so. When at last they *did* come to a vote, in November, 1651, after the



power of Cromwell was finally established, their resolution was only, that they would dissolve themselves three years afterwards, in 1654, — a resolution that could satisfy no one, but much the contrary.

They had, therefore, not chosen to make a common cause with the public, and being thus without support from within and from without, Cromwell took a few soldiers with him, expelled them from the House, and locked up the doors of it, as soon as he found them an encumbrance to his ambition. He first, indeed, acquainted them, "that the Lord had done with them." The public, who never favor those who have no visible merits to produce, still less those who have seemed attentive chiefly to their own selfish interests, saw this new act of military violence with indifference, and probably with pleasure.

Certainly, these Republicans, after a trial of three years, had entirely failed as politicians, and had established no Republic. But they had great merits in endeavouring to introduce improvements into the law. The laudable efforts of the Long Parliament on this subject have never been properly acknowledged. The state of all the real landed property of this kingdom is, at this moment, materially influenced by the happy effect of their legislative provisions; and those men of property who inquire will find that their estates have been as much indebted as themselves to these Parliamentary leaders for any freedom that belongs to them; both the one and the other were emancipated from feudal manacles.

Cromwell now alone remained, supreme and unresisted; and thus at length terminated, in the usurpation of a military chief, the original struggle between the king and Parliament. And this, as I have already announced at the beginning of this lecture, has always been considered as the necessary issue of any successful appeal to arms on the part of the people, — a position to which I do not indiscriminately assent, and on which I shall, therefore, offer some observations in my next lecture.

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## LECTURE XVII.

CROMWELL. — MONK. — THE REGICIDES, ETC.

TOWARDS the conclusion of my last lecture, we had arrived at the usurpation of Cromwell; and this usurpation of a military chief, I then observed, has always been considered as the natural issue of any successful appeal to arms on the part of the people.

This position, it appears to me, has always been laid down too broadly and indiscriminately. The question seems to admit of a distinction, and it is this: — If a people have been long subject to all the evils of an arbitrary government, and at last break out into insurrection, it is to be expected, no doubt, that the last favorite of the army, who survives the contest, will gradually procure for himself the power which the former sovereigns had abused and lost. There is no material shock here given to those habits of thinking and feeling which, notwithstanding all the intermediate troubles, must still form the genuine character of the great body of the nation. But the case is materially altered, if we suppose a people *before* possessed of constitutional rights, and endeavouring to defend or enlarge them, in opposition to those who would limit or destroy them. Here the event, if the popular party succeed; seems more naturally to be the ultimate strengthening and enlarging of the prior constitutional privileges, under some form of government similar to the former one. In this case, a usurpation is either not attempted, as in the instances of Switzerland and Holland, and, in our own times, of America, or, if attempted, the usurper finds himself impeded with such political difficulties, at every movement which he makes, that the continuance of his power is always a matter of uncertainty; and the original and irremediable disposition of the people, the result of their former better government, is sure at last to prevail, either over himself, or over his successors.

In illustration of this general reasoning may be cited the difficulties which Cromwell had to overcome, while he was endeavouring to seize the power of the state, and still more while he was laboring to retain it. I will give a general representation of them. Together they form a strong testimony to the permanent nature of the English mixed constitution, particularly of the monarchical part of it; and they go far to prove that the usurpation of Cromwell was not, as has been generally supposed, a successful one.

These are the principal topics of reflection to which I would at present wish to excite your attention. Hume and Millar, and the regular historians and writers, will supply you with many others.

Cromwell had to subdue, not only the Royalists, but the Presbyterians; and this, not merely by force, but by the most extraordinary performances of cant and hypocrisy that human nature ever yet exhibited. But why? Because these descriptions of men bore fresh upon their minds the impression of the constitution of England, and were only solicitous, according to the best of their judgment, to support or improve that constitution. By the same arts and means were the Independents, the Republicans, to be overpowered by the usurper, and for the same reason. They, too, were impressed with the original stamp which had been received from the popular part of this constitution; and they had deviated from it only because they



thought that the monarchical part had been found, from trial, incompatible with the interests of the country. That a military usurper, that any single person, should rule was not in the contemplation or wishes, probably, of any one disinterested Englishman at the time.

And it is here that may be found the great proof of the talents of Cromwell, which is not only, as Mr. Hume states, that he could rise from a private station to a high authority in the army, but still more, that he could afterwards bend the refractory spirits and direct the disordered understandings of all around him to the purposes of his own ambition, to the elevation of himself to the Protectorate, in violation of all his former professions and protestations, public and private, and in defiance of all the men of principle and intrepidity who had been so long his associates and friends in the Parliament and in the army.

The gross and ignorant soldiers might, indeed, be well content that he who gave them pay and plunder should have every thing to dispose of; and in their idolatry of a successful general, they might, for a time, forget their country, and those forms of established authority to which they had once been accustomed. But still, it was these coarse and brute instruments upon which Cromwell could *alone* depend; and, after all, as the mass of an army must always be managed through the medium of its officers, it was here, in this management of the officers, that his extraordinary powers were exhibited in a manner so striking. Some he could make his creatures by mere bribery, by lucrative posts and expectations; but the rest, and not unfrequently many of the common soldiers themselves, he was obliged to cajole by every art and labor of hypocrisy, — to surround and bewilder them with a tempest of fanaticism, of sighs and prayers, of groans and ejaculations, — in short, to elevate and involve his heroes and himself in a cloud, till he was able there to leave them, and himself to descend and take undisturbed possession of the earth.

Whoever reads the history of these times cannot well believe that this military usurper, daring and powerful as his abilities were, both in the cabinet and in the field, could possibly have succeeded, if the religious principle had not unfortunately found its way into every part of the dispute between the king and his people, and so disturbed the natural tendency of things, as to render any achievement practicable, which could well be conceived by a man of military skill and fanaticism united. But observe his progress.

When the young king had been finally defeated at Worcester, when the Republicans had been turned out of the House of Commons, when Cromwell, with his council of officers, was left alone on the stage, and when it would generally be said that the natural termination of the contest had arrived and Cromwell had now only to enjoy what he had acquired, his difficulties, on the contrary, seemed rather to multiply than to cease. Cromwell, though triumphant, and

without a rival, could never be at ease, and he was continually laboring to make his government approach, as much as possible, to the model of the old one, and to those forms which he knew could alone be considered as legitimate. He was now himself precisely in the situation in which the Independents, the Republicans, had lately been. He, like them, durst not appeal to a full and fair representation of the people, yet it was necessary to have a Parliament; he could not otherwise color his usurpation; he therefore proceeded to manufacture one with all expedition.

But as he had violated the feelings and opinions of every man of principle and consideration, he could trust no one who possessed much of either; and his Parliament contained, though with a mixture of others of a superior class, men of low condition and foolish fanaticism. The Parliament which he collected and made was the Parliament known by the ludicrous appellations which were gravely assumed by many of its members,—"Praise God Barebones," &c., &c. These creatures he seems to have let loose upon the courts of law, probably for the sake of terrifying the lawyers. Courts of law are never very popular with the vulgar, and therefore senators like these soon proceeded to the attack of the Court of Chancery, *nem. con.* If you look into Cobbett, their language will amuse you. They showed a rapidity of movement which must have appeared not a little marvellous to the court itself; certainly the court could not have been taught to comprehend it from any experience in its own proceedings. But a Parliament of this kind, so little fitted to be a part of an English government, was found by Cromwell, after a few months' trial, unfit to answer his purposes; so their power was partly resigned, and partly taken from them, and they returned to their more natural occupations in private life.

Still, a Parliament and a constitutional government of some kind or other were necessary. Cromwell, therefore, and his council of officers drew up an instrument of government, spread the power of representation over the whole of England and Wales very fairly, and began again. Even in this instrument it is observable that the supreme legislative authority is made to reside in one person and in the people assembled in Parliament, — that is, in a king and House of Commons, — and that the provisions are far more unfavorable to the executive power than those in the English constitution, with one exception. This exception is contained in those articles on which, no doubt, Cromwell depended for his own protection, the twenty-seventh and three following. These provided for the maintenance of a standing military force of ten thousand horse and twenty thousand foot. The powers, however, that were given to the Parliament might soon have been converted to the destruction of any Protector who was not a favorite with the army. — Three hundred members assembled, and Cromwell was soon obliged, on account of the freedom of their de-



bates, to make them a long harangue, and to declare, that, "after seeking counsel from God, he must prescribe to them a test to sign." The debates still continued disagreeable to him. At length, after the manner of the very king whom he had dethroned, he dissolved them.

After an interval of two years and a half,\* he still thought it expedient to call once more a Parliament, — the third; and every effort was made to pack together an assembly devoted to his designs; but all in vain. He had to deny particular members admittance, was resisted by a large portion of the House, assailed by a spirited remonstrance, and felt in his turn, like his misguided master, that it is in vain to expect sufficient countenance to illegal proceedings from any tolerable representation of the people of England.

Still anxious and dissatisfied, still desirous to rest his authority upon some established principle, he meditated the assumption of the title of King. He got the affair put in motion in the House. The lawyers told him, and probably with great sincerity, that this title of King (to use their own words) was a wheel upon which the whole body of the law was carried; that it stood not on the top, but ran through the whole veins and life of the law; that the nation had ever been a lover of monarchy, and of monarchy under the title of King; that, in short, this title of King was the title of the supreme magistrate, which the law could take notice of, and no other. Cromwell desired time to "seek God for counsel"; that is, he wished to know the opinions of the army; and while he was ascertaining them, he hesitated from day to day, and renewed from day to day his long replies, — replies which gave no answer, and were full of broken sentences, interrupted conclusions, doubts and insinuations, perplexity and more than Egyptian darkness; but, having at length satisfied himself that the measure was disagreeable to his *army*, his elocution cleared up in an instant, and nothing can be more distinct than his short final speech, "that he could not undertake the government with the title of King."

Legitimate authority, or even the appearance of it, was now impossible; a new settlement of the government was therefore adjusted, under the form of a Petition and Advice, in its articles still very favorable to the liberties of the subject, but with the same material exception of the grant of a revenue to maintain the army of the executive power. Cromwell was to be solemnly inaugurated Protector; a second house was to be added to the House of Commons; Lords were to be called to it by Cromwell; — that is, the form of government was thus made still more and more to approach to the model of the original constitution.

\* Only one year and a half. Cromwell's second Parliament was dissolved January 22, 1654-5, and this third Parliament was called July 10, 1656. See Cobbett's *Parliamentary History*, Vol. iii. col. 1460, 1478. — N.

Cromwell, however, was still overpowered with impossibilities. The few real peers that he summoned to his upper house, with one base exception (Lord Eure), forbore to take their places; the Commons relished not their title and questioned their authority; and the Protector, enraged at their impracticable behaviour, dissolved them. This was the last experiment in the way of a Parliament that he made; having dissolved the assembly in February, he died in September.

Now this, after all, is not a specimen of successful usurpation. He maintained his power for five years, but it seems very doubtful whether he could have done it much longer; his friend Monk thought not. His power still continued to be, as it began, merely that of the sword; no appearance of legitimate rule could be contrived for him; there was no principle existing in the English constitution which he could work up to accomplish his designs; there was no train of habits in the minds of the people of England which could afford him any foundation on which to build authority for himself. He was not assassinated, but he lived in continual apprehensions of it; he was not hurled from the government by his soldiers, but it was the labor of his life to prevent it. Abroad was the young king; at home were the Royalists, the Presbyterians, the Republicans, and enthusiasts of every description, the most insane and dangerous, most of whom he had in turn deceived, and therefore exasperated. Even in the bosom of his family, the great questions of religion and politics had interfered to disturb his peace. And his example seems to show, as far as the example of so extraordinary a character in times so extraordinary can afford any general conclusion on such points, that, amid a people whose constitution has been free, a brave and able man may sometimes seize upon the chief executive power, and even possess it for some time, but that he will be able neither to enjoy it, nor to engraft it upon the former constitution of the kingdom; that he will not be able to introduce a new line of arbitrary sovereigns, — himself the first; and, on the whole, that, in public as well as private, success, as it is called, will be for ever fatal to all ideas that even an ambitious man can entertain of happiness and repose.

If this reasoning be just, (and the facts at least I have not misstated,) the conclusion is, — first, a strong testimony to the permanency of the monarchical part of our constitution, arising from the steadiness and intelligence of the English character; and again, that, when freedom has been at all enjoyed in any country, (for this is the supposition,) resistance to arbitrary encroachments is not necessarily followed, even if a revolution is to be endured, by any military usurpation that will be ultimately successful.

Cromwell, I must contend, did not succeed; he could not become the peaceful and acknowledged sovereign of his country. He did, however, what alone it was in his power to do. He was a good dis-



corner of character, and he therefore selected lawyers of ability from the profession, and persuaded them to administer to the people, though he might sometimes disregard them himself, the known laws of the country; he employed officers of courage and capacity by land and sea; he wielded with effect the formidable energies of a people that had been lately and might still be considered as in a state of revolution; and, like other usurpers, he endeavoured to hide in a blaze of glory a throne that was defiled with blood.

To understand the conduct of Cromwell and the Republicans, not only must the *Memoirs of Holles* be read, but those of *Ludlow*. *Ludlow's* work becomes very important after the account of the battle of *Naseby*. There is also a book which has been lately published, the *Life of Colonel Hutchinson*, printed from a manuscript account drawn up by his widow, a woman of singular merit, — who, if her political opinions (the opinions of her husband) be forgiven her, will appear without a blemish, will be thought to have united the opposite virtues of the sexes, and to have been alike fitted to give a charm to existence amid the tranquillity of domestic life, and in an hour of trial to add enterprise and strength to the courage of a hero. Both of these memoirs (those of *Ludlow* and of *Colonel Hutchinson*) are original works, and as those parts that relate to military concerns may be slightly glanced over, they will be found neither long nor tedious, and they ought, in this manner, by all means to be carefully read. *Mrs. Hutchinson* is often a painter of manners as minute and far more forcible than even *Clarendon*.

It is evident from these different memoirs that the character of *Cromwell* was seen through, by the intelligent men of every description of opinion, — not only by *Holles*, the Presbyterian, but by the Republicans *Ludlow* and *Hutchinson*. It appears, too, that *Cromwell* himself was unremittingly employed in ascertaining the views and character of every one around him; that his whole life was a constant train, not only of political hypocrisy, but of political speculation and enterprise. As specimens of his manner, *Ludlow* may be consulted at pages 79, 105, 135, in the quarto edition, and *Hutchinson*, 287, 309, 340; here will be found dialogues that passed between these men and *Cromwell*; and no doubt he sounded all the principal men near him as opportunity offered, and those of inferior rank and intelligence in ways far more curious than those that are here recorded or can now be known.

These works are also both of them very interesting, as exhibiting to us those views of this important contest, in all its different stages, which were entertained by such of the Republicans as were men of regular sense and clear honesty. The rapid, unceremonious manner in which *Ludlow*, from the first, arrives at his conclusions, as well as *Mrs. Hutchinson*, and their reasonings and views of the contest, should be considered, not only in contrast with those of the King's

State Papers, but in comparison with the suggestions of the reader's own mind. It may be useful to observe the manner in which men of good understandings and good intentions may reach very opposite extremes of opinion, though exercising their judgments upon the same materials. Habits of candor and patient investigation may thus be introduced, and the character, on the whole, improved and humanized.

Is it not curious, for instance, to observe that Hutchinson applied himself, before the breaking out of the Civil War, as his wife relates, (I quote page 78,) "to understand the things then in dispute, and read all the public papers that came forth between the king and Parliament, besides many other private treatises, both concerning the present and foregoing times, whereby he became abundantly informed in his understanding, and convinced in conscience, of the righteousness of the Parliament's cause, in point of civil right"? And, again, is it not affecting to perceive, that, before he signed the fatal warrant for the execution of the king, "he addressed himself to God by prayer, desiring the Lord, that, if, through any human frailty, he were led into any error or false opinion in these great transactions, He would open his eyes, and not suffer him to proceed, but that He would confirm his spirit in the truth, and lead him by a right enlightened conscience; and finding no check, but a confirmation in his conscience that it was his duty to act as he did, he, upon serious debate, both privately and in his addresses to God, and in conferences with conscientious, upright, unbiassed persons, proceeded to sign the sentence against the king"?

Many other curious particulars may be drawn from this work: that the king, for instance, sent forth commissions for array, and the Parliament gave out commissions for their militia, so as "in many places there were fierce contests and disputes, almost to blood, even at the first" (page 95); that all the nobility, gentry, and their dependents were generally for the king, while "most of the middle sort, the able, substantial freeholders, and the other commons who had not their dependence upon the malignant nobility and gentry, adhered to the Parliament." And from page 344, and other places, we may conclude that the Puritans were not always men of minds disordered by religious zeal and debased by vulgar cant and enthusiasm; but, when men of consideration, like Colonel Hutchinson, were very fair models of the English country gentleman, such as the character appears under its best aspect, men properly interested in the civil and religious liberties of their country, accomplished and well informed according to the notions of their age, active in the duties of the neighbourhood and county, pious, hospitable, and domestic.

It must be observed that this manuscript of Mrs. Hutchinson can be valuable only to those who have already acquainted themselves with the English history. They can thus only be enabled to derive



full benefit from her short, rapid, forcible summaries and statements of the circumstances and characters that pass in review before her. Her comment extends from the time of Henry the Eighth to her husband's death, after the Restoration.

In addition to Ludlow and Hutchinson, Whitelocke should be looked at. The most important passages are generally in Italics; and there are some with respect to Cromwell very remarkable: I allude to a dialogue between him and the usurper in St. James's Park. There are different editions of this work; the last is the proper one.

There is a great work of seven quarto volumes, Thurloe's State Papers, which contains much matter, but it is not often interesting, and the whole, therefore, would naturally be passed by; yet this need not be the case, for there is a most excellent index, from which a sufficient idea of the contents of the volumes may be acquired; they are sometimes important, and the reader may be enabled to find whatever the perusal of other works may lead him to look after. At the end there is given an account of the remarkable conferences that took place with Cromwell on the subject of his assuming the title of King,\* most of which should be read: these are the conferences I alluded to at the beginning of this lecture.

With respect to the situation of Charles the Second some idea may be formed from Clarendon; more particularly, there is an account of the young king's escape after the battle of Worcester, not only in itself romantic, but often very descriptive of the manners of the times, a merit that generally belongs to this writer; there is a very curious one also in the Pepys Library at Magdalen.

Sir Edward Walker, in his Historical Discourses, gives an account of the young king's proceedings in Scotland; and in this account may be seen the state papers of the Presbyterians, in all their own ridiculous cant and phraseology; for this reason the work is valuable. But with respect to other particulars, Hume has already seized upon all that were much worthy of notice, and transferred them to his History.

There is a work by Mr. Noble, *Memoirs of the Cromwells*, which may occupy a morning or two very agreeably and usefully; a variety of information respecting the Protector and his family is given, and many sources of further information are presented to the reader, with an account of the different lives that have been written of the Protector, and many particulars of his government and connections, of the persons he employed and honored, and of some of the leading characters that appeared in these singular times.

\* Professor Smyth refers to a *quarto* edition of Thurloe. The *folio* edition of 1742 is the only one of which I have been able to find any trace; and the copies of this which I have consulted contain nothing whatever pertaining to these conferences, except a speech of Cromwell's. A full account of them will be found, however, in Somers's Tracts, 2d Coll. (London, 1750), Vol. iii. pp. 113-174. — N.

There is a *Life of Cromwell* by Harris, in the manner of his other historical treatises, and equally valuable.

There has been lately a *Life* published by one of his descendants, of the same name, a respectable lawyer at the Chancery bar ; it is, as might be expected from its origin, very tedious, and soon ceases to interest, for the reader perceives that the author is too determined a defender and panegyrist of his ancestor to deserve much attention.

The description of Cromwell given by Cowley (his *Vision*) is well known, and this *Vision* is easily reduced, and, as always happens in such cases, is *more* than reduced, to the standard of propriety and truth by a few calm observations from the reasoning and balancing mind of Mr. Hume. The two paragraphs in the sixty-first chapter of Hume, the quotation from Cowley, and the comment, contrast agreeably enough the opposite merits of Cowley and Hume, of the poet and the philosopher.

At the end of the sixtieth chapter of Hume there is a summary of the whole contest, remarkable, among other accounts, for its admission that "the king had in some instances stretched his prerogative beyond its just bounds, and, aided by the Church, had wellnigh put an end to all the liberties and privileges of the nation."

Thus much for the general topics that belong to this period of our history, and the writings where they may be found.

But it is desirable that a more intimate knowledge should be acquired of the revenue that was drawn from the public during these times than can readily be gathered from a perusal of the historians. The work of Sir John Sinclair may be referred to, and ought to be consulted ; our general expectations will appear verified by the details. These show the profligate waste of James the First, the inflated expense and arbitrary impositions of Charles the First, and the immense expenditure and embezzlement of the public treasure during the Civil Wars and the domination of the Protector. These expenses of the Long Parliament and Cromwell have been produced to prove that republics are not less expensive than arbitrary governments. But no conclusion, either favorable or otherwise, can be drawn from cases of this kind, where republics are struggling for existence amid wars domestic and foreign, in a situation necessarily exposed to every species of mismanagement and irregularity. The question should rather be, whether republics or arbitrary governments are most liable to official extortion and plunder, and which are most disposed to engage in wars ; and arguments must be drawn from the conduct of each, when in a state of composure, and at liberty to follow the real genius of their respective constitutions.

A far more accurate conclusion may be drawn from these financial details with respect to the endless miseries that must have been occasioned by these civil wars,—miseries such as appeared in no siege or field of battle, and such as no historian has delineated, or could



delineate. We see, in the abstract of the money raised from 1640 to 1659, three millions and a half from sequestrations of the lands from bishops, deans, and inferior clergy for four years. Another article is, one million and a half for the tenths of all the clergy, and other exactions from the Church, and this at a time when the millions of the subject did not roll into the exchequer in the countless progressions of modern times. Yet, even in these times of our ancestors, when the general affluence of the country was comparatively insignificant, the figures of Sir John Sinclair still move onward into rows of dreadful millions, and in the following manner : —

Sale of church lands . . . . .	£10,000,000
Sequestrations of the estates and compositions with private individuals in England . . . . .	4,500,000
Compositions with delinquents (as in the jargon of civil hate they were denominated), those in Ireland . . . . .	1,000,000
And for the sale of the estates of those in England more than . . . . .	2,000,000
For the sale of Irish lands more than . . . . .	1,000,000

A long list this, in all of more than £23,000,000, every item of which is indicative of domestic wretchedness ; nothing is here included of subsidies, poll-money, assessments, and other levies, which were £60,000,000 more. These are articles of account that in every shilling of them, to the amount of these £23,000,000, suppose the loss of prosperity, families reduced, the scenes of private tranquillity filled with alarm and terror, the comforts of society at an end, and the affluent, the aged, and the defenceless often thrown into a world of violence, to encounter privation, poverty, and every sad mutation of fortune that can sink the comfort or try the patience of the human heart.

Such are the afflicting monuments of civil and religious hatred. We do not speak of the thousands that perished by sickness or the sword.

Upon the death of Oliver, the Protectorate was quietly transferred to his son, and he received addresses from all quarters, that left him to expect the peaceable possession of his honors. But the sky was soon overcast ; he had fallen upon evil days, was unfit to control the soldiery, and, after consulting with Thurloe and other experienced counsellors, to learn how he could best maintain his authority, too amiable to contend for power by the sanguinary measures which were proposed to him, and too rational, perhaps, to be much concerned about the loss of it, he dissolved the Parliament which he had assembled, the only civil authority that existed, and therefore the only power that could be friendly to him, and left Fleetwood, Disbrowe, and the army to dispose of the affairs of the public as they thought proper. Monk was in Scotland with an army, and nothing very

certain was known about him, but that Lambert and he were no friends.

And now it was that the nation very narrowly escaped the greatest of all evils, — the contentions of rival generals at the head of their armies, the *plusquam civilia bella*. Happily, the officers that Cromwell left behind him were none of them, like himself, fit to rule the world when it was wildest. Of this Monk might be sufficiently aware. Lambert only could have been an object of apprehension to him.

Monk must have been also aware that not only the Cavaliers, but all the Presbyterians, constituting together, as he must have suspected, a large majority of the nation, longed ardently for the restoration of the monarchy. His own opinions, or, at least, ideas of interest, probably inclined the same way.

His line of conduct was, therefore, clear, — that is, clear to such a man; he could attain to no real consequence but by overpowering Lambert and the officers; *that* danger he had to risk, and that only; the Parliament which they had collected, and which was the remainder of the Long Parliament, were decided Republicans; those he could easily keep on good terms with, for they were on bad terms with their masters, the army; and in the mean time, by marching to London, he could ascertain, as he passed through the country and the city, the real wishes of the people of England, and be prepared to provide for his own safety and fortunes, on every turn of the political wheel, whether to monarchy or republicanism. The result was, that, with far less difficulty than could possibly have been expected, he restored the young king to the throne of his ancestors.

Monk was a leader of armies and of fleets, and upon every occasion displayed the most consummate valor. Yet is he never considered as a hero; so inseparable from our idea of heroism is that *fearless sincerity*, that open, *impetuous generosity*, which formed, in fact, no part of his character.

The services of Monk were of the most solid and striking nature; he rescued his country from the domination of an army that had grown invincible among the Civil Wars, and that lived upon her ruin. Yet has Monk never been honored with the appellation of a patriot; for he interested not himself in her laws and liberties, and temporized till he seemed to follow, rather than to lead, the current of public sentiment.

Monk was originally the friend of Cromwell. He was employed by the Republic; he received their pay, and led their armies; he has been, therefore, denied even the common praise of a gentleman and a soldier, — integrity and honor. So deep a shade will always involve the fame of him who has ever, in politics, obviously shifted his ground, and at last adopted, whether from a real change of principle or not, the side which was favorable to his interest.



These sweeping decisions of mankind on the characters of public men are not to be regretted; public men should be taught that their virtues are at all events to be clear and intelligible, that their conduct is to explain itself. Such expectations in the community are the best discipline that public men can conform to. Even when this discipline has had its full effect, under every form of government, the public men will always be too much disposed to sink themselves beneath their own natural standard of excellence, to be satisfied with wishes and intentions, rather than positive exertions and acts of service, and to be too ready unworthily to yield to the suggestions of shuffling meanness and ingenious self-interest.

The historian, indeed, may come afterwards with the exercise of that candor and intelligence which can never be expected from the public, and it may be *his* province, and his more proper province, to make his distinctions and explanations, and to weigh out in his faithful balance those more minute and doubtful portions of merit that belong to the characters he has to estimate. It may be for *him* finally to decide what there is of virtue in the vicious, and of fault in the virtuous. In the instance before us, therefore, it is but justice to the memory of a man who acted so important a part in our history as Monk did, not slightly to disregard the representation of his character by Hume; it is too favorable, but it is easily contrasted with the severer estimates of opposite writers.

There is a Life of Monk by his chaplain, Price, which I have at length been able to procure, but it disappointed me. There is another by his chaplain, Dr. Gumble, who was *originally* connected with the Cromwells, and writes like a violent Royalist. Violence, on a change of party or character, is not indeed very unusual, and it is as disgraceful at last as it was at first. Gumble's narrative is interesting; from his subject, and connection with Monk, it could not be otherwise; but his account is, after all, what might be expected from the known facts of the history, and the particulars are interwoven into Hume's more concise account. There is also a History of Monk by Webster, or rather by Dr. Skinner, Monk's physician, for Webster is only the editor of the Doctor's manuscript. This work is also a minute and favorable account of Monk and the Restoration. Gumble's Life, at least, should be looked at, as it is always quoted.

Monk is represented by these writers as always resolved in secret to restore, if possible, the monarchy; but as this, from his professions and dissimulation, must always be doubtful, the clear merit of Monk is, that he effected, without bloodshed and completely, that which it was most desirable should be done by some one, and which at the time could be so done only by himself. This is his clear merit; but the clear accusation against him is the heavy one of selfishness and baseness. He received his commission and his army from the Republicans; then converted them to the purpose of restoring royalty; and

above all, he immediately afterwards sat in a court where Republicans were tried for their lives and condemned.

But another capital fault in him was, that he made no effort for the security of the liberties of his country, either publicly by stipulations made with the king before he came over, or privately by expectations intimated to him in the communications that took place previously to the Restoration. His great praise was his advice to the king from the first to pass an act of indemnity on the past offences of his subjects; but even this advice, it must be confessed, was at the time, both for himself and the sovereign, the best policy; as the soldiers and officers who had dethroned Charles the First might otherwise have been rendered desperate.

This part of the history is drawn up with great ability by Hume. It may be read in conjunction with the Parliamentary proceedings; and the journal of Whitelocke now contains more passages than usual, which, however short, are most valuable, from being so descriptive of the times. His papers seem to have been burnt by his wife, in some moment of very natural alarm; still, there remains the journal, marked occasionally with those lively touches of personal observation and feeling which can be given only by an actor in the scene. Whitelocke was from the first right in his judgment; he took Fleetwood aside, predicted the conduct of Monk, and told him that he must either immediately vanquish him in the field, or anticipate him in an accommodation with the young king.

Whitelocke's Memorials were published by the Earl of Anglesey in 1682. He took considerable liberties with the manuscript. Another edition was published in 1732, which restored many important passages struck out by the earl; and hence the different price of the two editions, ten shillings or five guineas. Hume always refers to the old or truncated edition. See D'Israeli, page 144, vol. i. of second series of *Curiosities of Literature*.

The representations of the two Republicans, Ludlow and Hutchinson, are also now more than ever interesting.

The difficulty of the Republican party was always the same, and always insurmountable. They never could attain to power without the support of the army, and they then could never retain the army in civil obedience. But the ardor with which they pursued their republic is very remarkable, and it seems to have blinded them to all the interests of the constitution, and of themselves. An important distinction existed in their opinions. Ludlow was prepared to borrow assistance for his political measures from the army. Hutchinson's republicanism was more pure and intelligent; he always considered such expedients as unlawful, and unfit to be resorted to. We follow, therefore, Hutchinson to his retirement with stronger feelings of respect than Ludlow to his exile.

Having now passed through the usurpation of Cromwell, the



speedy fall of his son, and the failure of the Republican party, I must briefly notice, before I conclude my lecture, the opening scenes of the Restoration.

On the restoration of the king, as public opinion is ever in extremes, the probability was, that the liberties of the country would be laid by the Parliaments at the feet of the monarch. But this cannot with any propriety be said of the first Parliament, — the Convention or Restoration Parliament. They sat from May to the end of the year. They passed an act, or rather confirmed an act of the Long Parliament, for taking away the courts of wards and livories, together with tenures in capite, knights' service, tenures in purveyance. This was the great legislative merit of the Long Parliament, to which I alluded in my last lecture as one not sufficiently noticed by historians. I must again refer you to the Note-book on the table. They were careful of grants of the public money; they did not make the king independent of the Parliament, either by the revenue which they fixed upon him, or the standing force which they suffered to remain; though, in exchange for this court of wards, they allowed him for life, and very reasonably, a grant of particular imposts on ale, beer, and other liquors, and left him Monk's regiment, about four thousand men, which were not disbanded, — a standing force, no doubt, that, however small, was still a precedent, and, as such, dangerous.

I stop for a moment to observe, that the question of a standing army is very different in different situations of society. Our situation now, in the midst of our large manufacturing towns and counties, is very different from what it was in certain periods of our history; our liberties, that is, the regular administration of the laws and the maintenance of order, can now be secured only by the very same sort of force by which before they might have been endangered.

Now one of the great reasons why the general maxims of the constitution were at this very critical period tolerably preserved must have been that so large a number of the Presbyterians had been elected into the Parliament: an important obligation this, which, as their faults are remembered, should not be forgotten.

The king and Parliament met and parted with mutual expressions of kindness. And after we have travelled through the horrors of a civil war, through all the ill-timed perseverance of the one party, the deplorable cant of the other, and the intolerance of all, it is very pleasing to us to hear at last the Parliament claiming to themselves the title of the Healing Parliament, and the Chancellor Clarendon, in one of his speeches, declaring that "the king was a suitor to them, that he made it his suit very heartily, that they would join with him in restoring the whole nation to its primitive temper and integrity, to its old good manner, its old good humor, and its old good nature."

It is on occasions like these that the character of this minister is

so attractive and respectable. It is understood, that, even during the sitting of this Parliament, he dissuaded the king from an attempt to procure an independent revenue for life. And, on the whole, it sufficiently appears that he never failed, while he possessed any influence, to use it to purposes the most noble, by recalling his sovereign's mind, whenever a fair opportunity offered, to those great principles and free maxims of the English constitution which, as the chancellor's good sense and bitter experience had told him, were not only the safeguard of the liberty of the subject, but the best security of the crown.

The mind of the chancellor was ardent; and, when the punishment of the Regicides came to be decided upon, his own sufferings and those of his first unhappy master made him, and still more the court and the lords, but too much forget the recommendations he had so well expressed in his speeches.

The trials of these state criminals are not long, and must by all means be read. Curious particulars are mentioned in them respecting the trial and condemnation of Charles, and the views and conduct of Cromwell and his adherents. But the great feature of the whole is the frightful enthusiasm of these misguided men, — frightful, because society can never be considered as perfectly safe, since human nature appears, from instances like these, capable of so wide a departure from all sobriety and reason. The observation of Hume, which from him might be at first suspected, will be found true: — that “no saint or confessor ever went to martyrdom with more assured confidence of heaven than was expressed by those criminals, even when the terrors of immediate death, joined to many indignities, were set before them.”

“I followed not my own judgment,” said Harrison, on his trial; “I did what I did as out of conscience to the Lord. . . . May be, I might be a little mistaken; but I did it all according to the best of my understanding, desiring to make the revealed will of God in his Holy Scriptures as a guide to me.” — p. 320.\*

“I can say,” cried Carew, another of the regicides, “in the presence of the Lord, who is the Searcher of all hearts, that what I did was in his fear; and I did it in obedience to his holy and righteous laws.” †

“I take God to witness,” said Scott, “I have often, because it was spoken well of by some, and ill by others, I have by prayers and tears often sought the Lord, that, if there were iniquity in it, he would show it me.” (p. 336.) — This man, in the interval which passed between the going and returning of the sledge that was first to take his fellow-sufferer to execution and afterwards himself, fell asleep! ‡

\* State Trials (3d ed., London, 1742), Vol. ii. — N.

† Ibid. p. 331. — N.

‡ It does not appear upon what authority Scott is made the subject of this anecdote;



Of all spectacles, the most alarming to a reflecting mind is the feebleness of reason to oppose religious or even political enthusiasm. Not only the vulgar, but men of education the most liberal, of talents the most brilliant, men like Sir Harry Vane, are almost equally exposed to these fatal eclipses of the understanding. Every protection that can be afforded to us by the powers of reasoning has been offered to us by Locke, in his observations on Enthusiasm. Practically, there seems nothing to be added, in the way of caution, but in religion never to lose sight of morality, and in political speculation never to depart from the great leading forms and maxims of the constitution. These humble principles, however, so obvious and so safe, are soon despised by men of ardent temperament; and it is the first symptom of religious or political enthusiasm to deny or disregard them.

The feelings of the public do not appear to have been outraged by the horrid mode of the execution of these regicides; and as they would be so at the present day, the national humanity must be considered as having most materially improved: an indication, this, of improvement in many other important points.

With respect to the number that were put to death, the conclusion is, on the whole, considering the nature of these times and the occasion, tolerably favorable to the court and to the kingdom. About thirteen were executed; but most of the regicides lost their estates; and of those who did not fly, many were kept to die in imprisonment, and very improper cruelty seems here to have been exercised.

Men must, no doubt, be deterred from crimes against the state by positive punishments; but the more complete and wide the acts of indemnity and oblivion are made in national dissensions, the better. The rancor of contending parties is thus softened. What is of still more consequence, the returns to peace in the course of national contests are afterwards more practicable. The great impediment to conciliation is always, that the parties dare not trust each other. He who draws his sword against the prince must throw away the scabbard. The steps between the prisons and graves of princes are few. These maxims, the dreadful maxims of civil dispute, have been the

but in the State Trials the same circumstance is related of another of the regicides, Scroop, and Scott is represented as having spent his last hours in prayer and conversation with his family and friends. "When the time approached for his execution, Mr. Scott and Mr. Clements were first carried away in the sleds, and the same sleds were afterwards to come and carry Col. Scroop and Col. Jones. During that time, says Col. Scroop, 'Well, Brother Jones, do you spend your time as the Lord shall direct you; I intend to take a little sleep, for I slept not well last night, and my countenance is not so fresh as I would have it.' Thereupon he laid him down, and slept so soundly that he snored very loud, and so continued until the sled came for him; whereupon, being awakened, he riseth up, and a friend, taking him in his arms, asked him how he did. He answers, 'Very well, I thank God, never better in all my life. And now, saith he, *'will I wash mine hands in innocency; so will I compass thine altar, O Lord.'* And so with great cheerfulness went to execution." *State Trials*, Vol. ii. p. 416. See, also, p. 412. — N.

cause of more misery and destruction to sovereigns and their subjects than all the real causes of contention that ever existed between them.

The history of our country during these wars was not defiled by those massacres, assassinations, proscriptions, or, with the exception of the execution of the king, with those outrages which have marked the progress of civil and religious fury in other countries and ages : a striking testimony to the merits of the English constitution, which alone could have infused into all ranks those manly feelings which are so indispensably necessary to the maintenance of honorable warfare ; an indirect proof, at the same time, that the constitution had not been of the arbitrary nature that was by some supposed.

This lecture was written many years ago, and there has been lately published a work on this subject by Mr. Godwin. It should by all means be read ; it is always interesting, and sometimes contains anecdotes and passages that are curious and striking ; — Godwin is always a powerful writer ; — and, above all, it is the statement of the case of the Republicans.

But, on the whole, in these volumes of Godwin there is no sufficient intimation given of the religious hypocrisy and cant of the Presbyterians first, or of the Independents and Cromwell afterwards. The history is an effort in favor of the Republicans of those times, founded on the paramount merit of a republic at all times. It is also very nearly a panegyric of Cromwell, — certainly so, as far as regard for the Republicans admitted.

From these pages it may be collected that Charles was never sincere, — that is, would never have adhered to any engagements, if he could have helped it ; that the Presbyterians sacrificed every thing to their hatred of Episcopacy, as Charles did to his love of it ; that the English nation was never sufficiently Republican for the purposes of the Independents ; afterwards, that Cromwell could never manage Royalists, Presbyterians, and Republicans, all of whom united against him. It is not sufficiently shown how Cromwell contrived to manage those whom he did manage ; all is made to depend on his *personal* powers of persuasion : but it is plain that his was an unsuccessful usurpation, after all.



## LECTURE XVIII.

## CHARLES THE SECOND.

TOWARDS the close of my last lecture I alluded to the opening scenes of the Restoration. I then reminded you of the remark that political reasoners have always made on occasions of this nature, — that, as mankind are ever in extremes, their resistance or rebellion no sooner ceases and changes into obedience than their obedience becomes servility; and that such renewals of an ancient government form an epoch of all others the most critical and dangerous to the liberties of a people.

The scenes that took place everywhere in the metropolis and through the kingdom, during the first stages of the Restoration, certainly confirmed such general conclusions. To a certain degree, so did even the proceedings of the Restoration Parliament. Still, it must be allowed that more care was taken of the liberties of the subject by the House of Commons than the general principles of human nature would have led us to expect; and this, as I then observed, is an important merit that belongs to the Presbyterians, who constituted so large a portion of its members, particularly to Sir Matthew Hale, the judge so justly celebrated. Hale is understood not to have been wanting to his country at this memorable period. He endeavoured to take proper securities for the constitution, — to come to some understanding with the king on this subject before he was finally restored; but all proposals of this kind were overruled.

You will do well, therefore, to observe the events that followed in consequence of these securities not having been taken. You will observe the conduct of the king through the whole of his reign, and finally the revolution that at length became necessary, in the short space of less than thirty years; and that, at this revolution, the patriotic party did only take such securities as Sir Matthew Hale would probably have proposed at the Restoration. You will then make your own inferences with respect to the propriety of all principles of general confidence, when interests so delicate, so fugitive, so important are concerned as those of civil liberty. Men of peaceable dispositions and refined minds are always the first to countenance these principles of general confidence in rulers and government; they are the very men, as I have once before observed, who should be the last; for they are the very men who of all others would stand most aghast, when things were at last driven to the dreadful alternative either of asserting the liberties of a people by force or losing them for ever.

We now proceed to the history of the reign. The first Parliament, the Convention or Restoration Parliament, was soon dissolved, and a new and regular Parliament was immediately summoned, and met in May, 1661. This was the Pensionary Parliament, as it was called, the Parliament that sat afterwards for so many years. Great exertions had been made by Clarendon in the elections, and it is understood that only about fifty-three of the Presbyterian interest were returned.

The settlement of the nation after the Rebellion was the great work before them, and was, in fact, intrusted to Lord Clarendon. This settlement was principally to be directed to two main points. In the first place, the state of the property was to be adjusted. Great transmutations had taken place, amid the rapine and confiscations, forced sales and purchases, which had been made under the authority of Parliament and the Protectorate. The adherents of the king were visibly those who had suffered during the commotions.

This subject is left in great perplexity by the account of Clarendon; but, comparing this account with other representations, to be found in a note in Harris's *Life of Charles the Second* (vol. i. p. 370), on the whole it may be concluded that such property as had been torn from the royal party, and was still in any very visible and distinguishable shape, was after some delay and management seized upon by the state and restored to its original owners. The crown lands, for instance, the Church lands, were taken from those who had purchased and held on Parliamentary titles, and some of the estates of the great families were recovered; but, on the whole, the good sense and legal education of Clarendon, and the natural fears of the king lest his throne should be endangered, concurred in producing the Acts of Indemnity and Oblivion. These were passed in the Restoration Parliament, and immediately confirmed on the meeting of the new Parliament. By these acts men seem to have been in general secured in the possession of their estates and property, as they then stood, with such exceptions as I have alluded to, and so endless a subject of contention was for ever put to rest.

The next great subject was one of even more difficulty, — the final settlement of the Church. The Church government had become Presbyterian. Was it to remain so? Was it to be modified? The circumstances were these. In England, intolerance had run, as in other countries, its natural course; first, between the Papists and Protestants, as you will see in Fox's *Martyrs*, and Dodd's *Church History*. The Church of England under Elizabeth had waged war also with the Puritans, still more so under James the First, and again, yet more violently, under the direction and counsels of Charles the First and Laud. All this you will see in Neal's *History of the Puritans*; you will easily make out from the prefaces what the chapters contain. In the Great Rebellion, however, it had happened



that the Presbyterians had established themselves, and they persecuted the members of the Church of England in their turn. On this head Walker's *Sufferings of the Clergy* may be consulted. A few pages of the work, where the author gives a general computation of the numbers who suffered, and a few more where he describes the different cases, will be a sad and sufficient specimen of the subject. Finally, under these mutual injuries, the members of the Church of England, who had been so distressed and overcome, were now once more triumphant by the event of the Restoration. Such were the circumstances, when the final settlement of the whole awaited the direction of Clarendon.

Now, that the Establishment should be suffered to continue as it then stood, to continue Presbyterian, was not to be expected. The chancellor had succeeded to the controversial opinions of his unfortunate master, Charles the First. A large description of laymen and divines concurred with him, all, like himself, long and highly exasperated with the Presbyterians; and the king, in the mean time, was, in secret, chiefly anxious that in the settlement some kindness and service might be rendered to the Roman Catholics. Clarendon and the Church could not assent to those theological tenets which they considered as false; nor could, in like manner, the Presbyterians to those which they equally considered as unauthorized by the Scriptures. The only question, therefore, was, whether all mention of the points in dispute could not be omitted, and the communion be thus made sufficiently comprehensive to include both.

This measure was practicable, for the Presbyterians objected not to the lawfulness of an Establishment; and their differences with the Church of England related chiefly, in doctrine, to the particular point of the apostolic origin of Episcopacy, and in discipline, to some few others of ceremony, — such as the wearing of the surplice, and the bowing at the name of Jesus, relics of Popery, as they conceived, — points which, whether in themselves important or not, became important to the inferior sect, if the superior sect insisted upon them, and if they were not passed over in silence. The question, therefore, was, whether points of ceremony, at least, could not be passed over in silence by Clarendon and the Church of England.

No adjustment of the kind, however, took place. The misfortune is, that no men have ever yet been able to prevail upon themselves to adopt a system of comprehension, who had it in their power to do otherwise: they cannot bear to omit in silence, for the sake of peace, and on the principles of benevolence and policy, those points which they find disputed; they are rather urged the more, on that account, to establish what they believe to be the doctrines of truth. The love of truth, and impatience of opposition, in this manner become passions that inflame each other, and not only in those who impose the law, but in those who are to receive it, in the inferior as well as

the superior sect. Vain, in the mean time, are the convocations, and conferences, and discussions of theologians; and therefore the result of the whole is, that questions of this nature have always been determined, very disgracefully to mankind, merely by the opinions of the strongest sect.

In this instance, the Presbyterians, as they were the inferior sect, pressed hard for a comprehension; but their hopes had gradually clouded over after the restoration of the king. Conferences were appointed between their divines and those of the Church of England, which may be judged of by those who pursue this subject through Neal, Baxter, and other writers; but all to no purpose, and the Act of Uniformity was at length passed; the terms of which turned out to be such, that the Presbyterian ministers could not conscientiously conform. Two thousand of them, on the day appointed for their final decision, threw up their livings; a memorable sacrifice, no doubt, to principle, after all that can be said, and that has been said, not very liberally, to explain away its merit.

Lord Clarendon, in the History of his Life, gives a full account of this great measure, and of all the acts of his very important administration. Most of this History of his Life is extremely interesting, — this part particularly. But along with this account in Clarendon, the work of Neal should be considered: part of the fourth chapter, and the fifth, sixth, and seventh chapters of the second part of the second volume, should be very attentively read. They are not long, and, with Clarendon, will be sufficient. But Burnet may be afterwards referred to.

Since these passing observations were written, the Constitutional History of Mr. Hallam has appeared, where the whole subject is very ably and impartially presented to the reflection of the reader, and must by all means be read.

When the student has arrived at the termination of the subject, he ought once more to consider the short, but important, declaration of the king from Breda; and, again, his declaration after he was restored, in October, 1660, when enough was promised for the reconciliation of the moderate of both parties: and nothing more could have been expected, if it had been faithfully executed. It will scarcely be thought that Clarendon and the court were sufficiently observant of the pledges they had there given: all the real spirit and meaning of the king's promises were violated. Clarendon's excuse is not sufficient; it is, that these promises were expressly declared subject to such limitations, exceptions, and modifications as the Parliament should afterwards make. But the acts of Parliament must necessarily be considered, in this case, as those of the king and his ministers; and a splendid opportunity was lost, first, of making a benign and wise effort for avoiding penal statutes, and allaying religious differences, by a scheme of comprehension; secondly, of exemplifying the



high honor and integrity of men in exalted stations, and the solidity, under whatever circumstances, of public engagements.

The reign of Charles may be divided into two intervals, by the disgrace of Clarendon. The first part we have now slightly touched upon; and my hearers must be referred to Clarendon's own Life, and the details of the regular historians, Burnet, and Hume, and Rapin, for proper information. We must now turn to consider the second interval of the reign, — that which begins after the disgrace of Clarendon.

Some time after the fall of this constitutional and upright, though not blameless minister, his merits were fully attested by the dreadful alterations that took place in the counsels of the sovereign. The reader instantly perceives, from the first appearance of the celebrated ministry called the Cabal, to the end of Charles's reign, that the most important struggle is still carrying on between the power of the crown and the rights of the people; and that the reign of Charles the Second is but a sort of supplement to the Great Rebellion in the time of his father. It is obvious, through the whole of this latter period of the reign, that the interests of Europe are as much abandoned by the court, as is all care of the liberties of England. Abroad and at home, the reader's sympathies are excited; the ambition of Louis the Fourteenth is seen, determined on the destruction of the Dutch republic and of every power that can be opposed to its injustice; while Charles, far from assisting the Dutch, seems rather engaged in an equally unprincipled enterprise against the constitution of his own country, and against every thing that can be an impediment to his expensive profligacy.

The subject, then, of the second part of the reign, the era which succeeded the disgrace of Clarendon, is the corruption of Charles, his connection with Louis the Fourteenth, his designs against the civil and religious liberties of this country by means of Louis's assistance; these are the points to which your attention must be directed. These designs were continued all through the reign, and I know not how better to attract your curiosity to this part of the reign, or better to allude to the connection that existed between the two monarchs for the destruction of the liberties of Holland and of England, than by describing to you the books and documents which, when you come to examine the reign, will necessarily claim your perusal. This, therefore, I shall proceed to do.

In the first place, it must be observed, that not much can be comprehended of the secret and real history of the period that succeeded the administration of Clarendon from the debates in the Houses; they must be read, but they serve rather to illustrate the representations of the historians, than to form, themselves, the materials of history.

The work of Burnet is to be perused; the reader will there per-

ceive in what colors the scene appeared to a sensible, upright, and very active observer, living at the time. An account of this kind is always quoted by subsequent historians, and has an interest and importance which the reader will soon feel as he proceeds, and which cannot be well described. After considering the pages of Burnet, I would ask the student whether his general conclusion is not this, — that the whole of this part of the reign of Charles was a conflict between the crown and the people, originating in the profligacy of the king, which, requiring larger supplies of money than the Commons could or ought to grant, urged him on to the most desperate attempts and practices against the constitution, rather than deny himself the gratification of his vices, and that it is even very probable, upon the face of Burnet's account, from the nature of a licentious character like this, that he descended to the meanness and criminality of receiving money from Louis, under some disguise or other, — sometimes that he might consent to assist, and sometimes that he might not impede, that monarch's unprincipled enterprises on the Continent? This, it appears to me, would be the general conclusion, deducible from the acknowledged facts of the times, though not the slightest assistance could be obtained from any private memorials or confidential documents whatever; and this remark I may have occasion to recall to your remembrance hereafter.

After Burnet, we may turn to Hume, and read him in conjunction with the debates in the Houses. Nothing can be more attractive, nothing can more strongly exemplify the charms and the merits of his seductive pages, than his life of Charles the Second. Ready, however, as every reader will naturally be to give his confidence to so masterly a writer, he cannot but perceive that the character of Charles the Second, as given by the historian, reflects not to his mind the true image of the original, but resembles rather one of those portraits which we so often see presented to us by the skill of a superior artist, where every grace and beauty that can consist with the likeness is transferred to the canvas, while every, the most inherent, deformity or defect is withdrawn or disguised.

It had not escaped the most ordinary politicians in the times of Charles, that there must have been some secret alliance between the king and Louis. It was, indeed, known as a fact to some of the popular leaders; proofs of the corruption of Charles were at last produced, even in the House of Commons, and became the apparent cause of Danby's impeachment. All the political writers of this period evidently suppose, that not only the House of Commons was bribed by the king, but the court itself by France. In the fourth page of the eighth volume of Hume, there is a remarkable passage, in which he says, that, on the whole, we are obliged "to acknowledge (though there remains no direct evidence of it), that a formal plan was laid for changing the religion and subverting the constitution of



England, and that the king and the ministry [the Cabal] were in reality conspirators against the people."

But after his sagacity and good sense had dragged him into this conclusion, he made inquiries in France, during his residence there, and saw with his own eyes that direct evidence which he had not supposed in existence. This evidence was found in some manuscript volumes kept in the Scotch College at Paris, and which Mr. Hume was permitted to peruse. These manuscript volumes were neither more nor less than a journal written by James the Second in his own hand, of his own life, during the most critical period of our history.

From such a treasure as this, it is a matter to be lamented, and, indeed, deserving of extreme surprise, that such an historian as Hume did no more than produce a single extract. This extract was important, but it might surely have been conceived that such manuscripts would have opened a boundless field of observation to one who was so capable of remarking on human character and political events. But on some account or other, not explained (and which I think cannot be explained favorably to Hume), he contented himself with adding to his History a single note, and nothing more.

There is yet again in Mr. Hume's History a second note on this reign of Charles (page 206) which deserves our attention; this second note is drawn from another source, — not from the papers or Life of James the Second, but the papers of Barillon, who was the French ambassador at the time. Charles, towards the close of his reign, dismissed his Parliament (says Mr. Hume in his text) and determined to govern by prerogative alone. "Whether any money," he continues, "was now remitted to England, we do not certainly know, but we may fairly presume that the king's necessities were in some degree relieved by France." And then follows a note, the note I now allude to, in which he gives an extract from one of the letters of Barillon, containing an account of a regular agreement verbally entered into between Charles and Louis, where good services are promised by the one and money by the other, for the purpose, it is said, of putting his Britannic majesty out of the reach of all constraint from his Parliament, which could interfere with his new engagements with Louis.

This curious treaty was communicated to Mr. Hume while in France, and by him to the public; but Mr. Hume gives no account of any further attempt to become acquainted with these despatches of the French ambassador, which it was evident, however, would unveil, wherever they could be inspected, the most curious scenes of intrigue and corruption. Hume himself thought them important, as appears by one of his letters to Robertson.

After the perusal of Mr. Hume, we may turn to the Life of Charles the Second by Harris. The notes are full of information,

and of particulars which the reader may not have an opportunity of selecting from their original sources, or, indeed, of readily finding in any other manner.

The connection of Charles with France, and the dishonorable nature of it, were sufficiently clear to this diligent investigator from the common authorities; but in his note (page 228, vol. ii.) he extracts a passage from a letter written to him by a friend, who had that morning heard read a letter from a gentleman who, while in France, had been permitted to see the memoirs of King James: his account is the same as Hume's. And now it is observable enough, that there is a passage in Voltaire's History of Louis the Fourteenth, which Harris quotes, and which tells the reader in a few simple words every thing which he can desire to know on this subject, and the sum and substance of every thing that there is to be known. "Louis," says Voltaire, — writing this long before the publication of Dalrymple's History, which I shall hereafter mention, — "designed the conquest of the Low Countries, which he intended to commence with that of Holland. . . . . But England was to be detached. . . . . Louis did not find it difficult to engage Charles the Second in his designs. . . . . His passion was to enjoy his pleasures. . . . . Louis, who to have money then needed only to speak, promised a great sum to Charles, who could never get any without the sense of his Parliament. The secret treaty concluded between the two kings was, &c. . . . . Charles signed every thing Louis desired," &c., &c.; and then the treaty is given, with the addition of some material circumstances. Such is the important information given by Voltaire. But Voltaire is a writer who, on account of his universality, his liveliness, and his known misrepresentations on sacred subjects, is never believed on any other, further than he is seen; or rather, as he never intimates his authorities, which he ought always to have done, every one believes as much of his historical accounts, or as little, as he thinks proper:

The corruption, therefore, of Charles, and his conspiracy against his people, was an historical fact very fairly made out, when Mr. Macpherson repaired to Paris, — an author not a little celebrated in the literary world (the author or editor of Ossian), one who could find manuscripts or make them, produce or withhold them, and in short, as it was understood, proceed with equal rapidity and success with them or without them. Two quarto volumes could not fail to be the consequence of this journey; the memoirs of King James could not possibly escape him; and the readers of history were at last gratified with extracts from this interesting performance, and with a regular work, entitled "Original Papers, containing the Secret History of Great Britain," &c., &c.

But when we come to open the volumes of Macpherson, we shall, in the first place, be somewhat dissatisfied with the introduction:



Macpherson tells his story, but not with simplicity; while simplicity, detail, minuteness, are, on occasions like this, not only the best test in point of literary composition, but indispensably necessary; for what the reader ought to know, and all that he desires to know, is the exact authority on which he is left to depend. When, in the next place, the Papers themselves are consulted, they seem not a journal written by the king himself in the first person, but a narrative where he appears in the third; this, however, might have been the king's mode of writing, and is not decisive: but it is soon observable that the Duchess of Cleveland is mentioned by that name, when the period of which the writer speaks is nine years and a half before the title was conferred upon her; so that the journal, or narrative, was evidently written, not while the events it alludes to were taking place, but long after; it therefore comes not warm from the heart, has nothing in it of that unpremeditated statement, exhibits none of those prompt and genuine impressions of the moment, which are the great delight and study of the philosopher and historian, whenever they can be surveyed, and is therefore, at all events, not as valuable as might have been expected. In the extracts furnished by Mr. Macpherson, little comment can be found on what are known to be the most critical points of the history of the times; and, on the whole, as far as the reign of Charles is concerned, the reader is extremely disappointed in the matter and in the manner, in the author and in the editor, of this journal or narrative, as exhibited by Macpherson.

But these memoirs of King James were destined to meet with one inquirer more. The late Mr. Fox, having formed a serious design of writing a more faithful account than he conceived had as yet been given of the great era in our history, the Revolution in 1688, repaired, as Mr. Macpherson had done, to Paris; and the journal of King James was, of course, one of the objects which occupied his attention. The history of his researches is contained in Lord Holland's preface to Mr. Fox's posthumous work. From this it appears that there was deposited in the Scotch College, not only an original journal by King James, but a narrative compiled from it, either by the younger Dryden, or one of the superiors of the society; and that it is the narrative from which extracts have been taken by Macpherson, not the journal. Mr. Fox declared, in a private letter to Mr. Laing, that he had made out that Macpherson never saw the journal. And, on turning to Macpherson's introduction, the student will find, that, though this skilful artist leads his reader to suppose that he saw this journal and copied it, still that he nowhere exactly says that he ever did see it; and his not having done so, and his wishing to be thought to have done so, have given rise to that want of simplicity in his statement which we have already noticed, and of which the necessity in all such prefaces is thus rendered more than ever apparent.

The fate of the original journal is curious : it was burnt from terror under the horrors of the French Revolution, when any thing connected with royalty, it was supposed, would be fatal to the possessor. The narrative is still safe, and is in the possession of Dr. Cameron, of Edinburgh.

Since I wrote the last paragraph, another copy of the narrative has been purchased in Italy. It was published by the direction of the present king, when he was regent ; and his merits were very great in first procuring these papers, and in suffering them afterwards to be exhibited to the curiosity of the public. The *Life of James the Second*, by Dr. James Stanier Clarke, is the title of the book. An article in the *Edinburgh Review* \* will give you all proper information.

But another publication remains yet to be mentioned, which deservedly excited the attention of the public on its first appearance, and which must always be examined with great care by every inquirer into the constitutional history of England, — the second volume of the *Memoirs of Dalrymple*. You may remember that I have already mentioned a note in Mr. Hume's *History*, founded on Barillon's despatches. This note showed clearly the importance of these despatches of the French ambassador. Sir John Dalrymple obtained permission from the French government to examine these despatches, and the second volume contains the result of his researches.

I shall endeavour to give you some general notion of the nature of these original materials, furnished by Macpherson in the first place, by these Stuart papers in the second, and by Sir John Dalrymple in the third.

I have already mentioned why the papers of Macpherson neither are nor could be so interesting as might have been expected, since it is not the king's own journal that the extracts are drawn from, but the narrative which was itself made out of the journal. Yet it is impossible that some curious particulars should not find their way even into a document like this. We see, for instance, Clarendon censured by James for not having made the crown more independent of the Commons in point of revenue, for not repealing the destructive laws of the Long Parliament, &c., &c.

Opposition to the court is always considered by James, then Duke of York, as, of course, faction and republicanism. Vol. i. p. 50, an account of the celebrated treaty with France, mentioned by Hume, is to be found ; it is mentioned more than once with some important particulars. (pp. 54, 80.) The ministers, it is said, contrived a marriage between the Prince of Orange and the Princess Mary, to pacify the Parliament, — James against it. And on the most important struggle of the reign, the bill of exclusion, there are these words

\* *Edinburgh Review* for June, 1816. — N.



(p. 111): — “Algernon Sidney, and the ablest of the republican party, said, that, if a bill of limitation was once got, they should from that moment think themselves sure of a republic”; and these words are subjoined, — “So the king judged.” Now the answer which the king always made to the popular leaders, when they pressed for a bill to exclude the Duke of York from the throne, was this, — that he would not exclude him, but would grant any limitations that could be thought necessary. It is clear, therefore, from this extract, that the king was not sincere when he offered limitations; for he could have offered nothing sincerely which he judged would lead to a republic.

Page 117. — “The House of Commons,” says the duke, “resolved, at some of their cabals, to begin with the bill of exclusion. Either that, or a bill of limitations, would be the destruction of the monarchy. It would serve likewise for a precedent to meddle with the succession on all occasions, and make monarchy elective.”

In page 124, is mentioned the curious agreement between Louis and Charles, quoted from Barillon by Hume. “The king’s necessities,” says the manuscript, “forced him to a private treaty with France. Fifty thousand pounds a quarter were the terms,” &c., &c.

There is a curious description of Shaftesbury, and of the king’s death, and of his conformity to the Roman Catholic religion: and, on the whole, the duke appears as bigoted in his religion, and as arbitrary in his political opinions, as might have been expected.

I now allude, secondly, to the Stuart papers. Macpherson’s work is now not a little superseded by the Stuart papers that have been published, — the *Life of James the Second* by J. S. Clarke. The same conclusions, however, may be drawn from the whole and from every part of these Stuart papers. Indeed, this is the most important point of view in which they can be placed; they will in every other respect disappoint you. They are a life of James, and yet there is little or nothing said of the Civil War, or of the Restoration, or of any other particulars to which your curiosity would naturally be directed. Much of the work is occupied with that part of the duke’s life that was passed on the Continent. But these papers are still perfectly valuable, because they everywhere confirm the reasonings and justify the opinions that have been formed by historians and statesmen on the critical topics of these times, the corruption of Charles, the bigoted and arbitrary nature of James, and the necessity of the Revolution of 1688. Wise and good men have not been at all deceived, as it is now evident from these papers. They vary, however, much in their importance in different places; and if you will only look well at the margin, and consider the subject-matter of the page before you, you will easily separate what is trifling from what is instructive, and in this manner find it an easy and even short task to read these two quarto volumes, large as they may appear.

And now it must be observed, that it is a point of some literary curiosity, at least, to determine what were the proceedings of Macpherson when he went to the Scotch College. In the work he has given to the public, whole paragraphs appear, verbatim, as they now appear in these Stuart papers. In general, the extracts given by Macpherson are abridged from the Stuart papers. You may easily compare the corresponding passages in the two works. But there are passages in Macpherson that I do not see in these Stuart papers; they are taken from Carte and others. Whence they were originally derived by Carte and others is not very clear. Carte was a Jacobite, left his papers to the Bodleian Library at Oxford, and Macpherson availed himself of them. These matters, are, however, of less importance, now that we have got in the Stuart papers an authentic document, containing always the sentiments and views either of James himself, or of those who were in his court and in his confidence, and who had, therefore, the same opinions with himself. But the character of Macpherson seems at an end. He endeavoured to deceive the public, and to make them believe that the extracts he gave were from the king's *own* journal; this they were not. He never saw the journal, as I have before mentioned. He made extracts from the Stuart papers, and additions from those of Carte.

I will now give you some general specimen of the information which you may derive from the work of Dalrymple. I will endeavour to exhibit to you their references to a few of the more striking particulars of the reign. It appears from these papers, that Charles made a treaty with the French king, to which only the Roman Catholic part of the Cabal were privy, — Lord Arlington and Lord Clifford, — not Shaftesbury, Buckingham, and Lauderdale. Charles was to get £200,000 for declaring himself a Roman Catholic, was to receive £800,000 per annum during the Dutch war, and was to be assisted with troops, if his subjects rebelled, which was called being “engaged in domestic wars.” But as Louis meant only to seize upon the Low Countries and destroy Holland, and cared not for Charles or his concerns any further than they could be made subservient to his own, it was next the effort of the French ministry to persuade Charles to begin with a war in Holland, and to postpone his domestic plans till the successful termination of the enterprise on the Continent. This duplicity the Duke of York saw through, and remonstrated, but in vain. The Duchess of Orléans was sent over by Louis with a French mistress, and it was soon agreed by Charles that the treaty should be executed in the order that the French monarch wished, — that is, that Holland should be destroyed in the first place.

A second treaty was then concluded, to which the Protestant part of the Cabal were made privy, though they had not been to the first treaty. The second was to the same purport as the first, but with one important omission, — the king's intentions with respect to the



Roman Catholic religion. This last treaty, whenever alluded to by the king and the duke in their communications with each other, went under the name of the Sham Treaty; and Buckingham and Shaftesbury, who thought themselves, no doubt, the first men of talents at the time, were, on this occasion, as they knew nothing of the first treaty, the dupes of their sovereign.

The reasonings on which the king and the French ambassador proceeded are curious. "Tell your people," says Barillon\* (p. 68), "that you will get their trade from the Dutch," who were represented as insatiably greedy; "the merchants will be satisfied with this commercial reason; your brave officers and soldiers will be occupied in the war with Holland; the sectaries will be in good humor with you, for the toleration you are to grant them; your Council are already committed; they will do their duty to you; they will keep those of the Parliament to it with whom they have credit; you may then, in the midst of a successful war with Holland, declare yourself a Catholic, there will be no grounds to fear," &c., &c.

But, in the midst of all these plots and projects, the Prince of Orange came over from Holland, probably to make out what was the meaning of the late visit from the Duchess of Orléans, the journeys of Buckingham to Paris, &c., &c. The Prince of Orange, afterwards William the Third, was therefore now to be practised upon; but the French ambassador writes to Louis, that Charles "finds him so passionate a Dutchman and Protestant," that nothing could be made of him.

And now begins a pleasant consultation, whether the Parliament should be assembled. "No," says the Duke of Buckingham; "No," says the Duke of York; "do not call them till we are successful in Holland, and till we can obtain by force what we cannot by mildness." — p. 80.

We have next notifications from the French ambassador to Louis of the manner in which he had disposed of what he calls "the marks of the king's esteem and distinction," — that is, the French bribes to Charles's ministers. And in this manner, it seems, were to be intrigued away, for the gratification of the profligacy of one monarch and the ambition of another, the liberties of England and the existence of the republic of Holland.

You will now, I conceive, be fully enabled to comprehend the general tenor of these original documents, and their connections with the history of the reign. The transactions of the reign, as I have already observed, I cannot further allude to; and such extracts as I

\* The French ambassador at this period was Colbert, and the reasoning here adduced is quoted (quite loosely, however) from his "Relation of what was said by him to the King of England in the Conference of the 28th Sept., 1670." Barillon does not appear to have been ambassador till seven years afterwards. See Dalrymple's *Memoirs of Great Britain and Ireland* (New Edition, London, 1790), Vol. i. pp 107 - 112; also, p. 152. — N.

have given, and such references as I have made to different books and papers, must be considered as the only allusions I can make to the particulars of the reign after the disgrace of Clarendon, and before Lord Shaftesbury and the exclusionists claim our attention. But there is one transaction so remarkable, that I may select it from the rest, and allude to it more distinctly: this is the king's Declaration on Ecclesiastical Affairs, — the Declaration that brought the struggle between Charles the Second and the virtuous part of the Parliament and nation to a sort of crisis. After alluding to this singular affair, and once more to a few passages in Barillon's despatches, I shall conclude.

It is probable that Charles cared as little for what Louis called his glory as Louis did for Charles's authority over his subjects. But Charles hated the Dutch, and he hated his Parliaments, as he did every thing that was an impediment to his own vicious indulgences; so he was sincerely desirous to be arbitrary, that he might have money without either the trouble of asking for it or the inconvenience of accounting for it. Depending, therefore, on the assistance of Louis and his own ministry, he hesitated not to undertake the establishment of a regular system of arbitrary power; and he began by publishing a Declaration of Indulgence to Nonconformists. It is now very important to observe the conduct of the House of Commons on this occasion. We cannot but be taught how necessary it is for that House, and for all Englishmen, to be scrupulously faithful to the great principles of the constitution, whenever they appear to be in the least disturbed.

The king's Declaration proposed to do only what every humane and intelligent man would wish to have done, — to extend relief to Nonconformists, to dispense occasionally with the penal statutes that operated so severely against them. The king, however, made use of the following expressions in his Declaration of Indulgence: — that he had a "supreme power in ecclesiastical matters," and that he "suspended the penal laws, in matters ecclesiastical, against whatever sort of Nonconformists"; and in his speech to the Parliament, that "he should take it very ill to receive contradiction in what he had done, and that, to deal plainly with them, he was resolved to stick to his Declaration."

Such were the words of the king. But, said a member of the House of Commons, "if the king can dispense with all *penal* laws, he may dispense with *all* laws." And finally, the Parliament, in an address to the king, represented to his Majesty, in short, "that penal statutes, in matters ecclesiastical, could not be suspended but by act of Parliament." The king and the House of Commons were therefore at issue.

The king in his answer declared, "that he was very much troubled to find his power was questioned; that this had not been done in the



reigns of any of his ancestors ; that he did not pretend to the right of suspending any laws, wherein the properties, rights, or liberties of any of his subjects were concerned, but to take off the penalties the statutes inflicted upon the Dissenters ; nor did he preclude the advice of his Parliament."

These softening expressions were sufficient to satisfy many of the members of the House, but the major and sounder part were not so to be appeased, and the House returned to the charge. They represented to his Majesty, "that his answer was not sufficient to clear their apprehensions ; that his Majesty had claimed a power which, if admitted, would alter the legislative power, which had always been acknowledged to reside in his Majesty and the two houses of Parliament." The parties were therefore still at issue.

Besides his usual guards, the king had an army encamped at Blackheath, under the command of Marshal Schomberg ; and the French king, it may be remembered, had stipulated to afford assistance, if force became requisite. Here, then, was a crisis truly awful ; and as the connection between the French court and Charles could not but have been observed (for the arms of England were visibly combined in the most unnatural manner with those of France against the independence of Holland), this crisis must have been sufficiently understood by all the intelligent and virtuous part of the community, — that is, by all those who did not wilfully suffer themselves to be blinded by some base interest of their own, or some stupid principle of general confidence.

In this situation the king applied to the House of Lords, and the Lords did not, as Hume and other writers represent, take the part of the Commons against the king, for they received his Majesty's communication very favorably ; and the king replied to their address in the following manner : — "My Lords, I take this address of yours very kindly, and will always be affectionate to you ; and I expect that you shall stand by me, as I will always by you." But notwithstanding this disgraceful alliance, offensive and defensive, it appears that thirty peers (and this shows the importance of virtuous minorities) had protested against the courtly address of the House ; and though Lord Clifford, one of the Cabal, had made a furious speech against the Commons, and though Lord Shaftesbury had done every thing for the court that they could wish, as far as the Dutch war was concerned, (having made a speech, in his character of chancellor, with which he was reproached to his last hour,) still, when the whole cause in which he had so seriously engaged came to the last critical turn, this very Shaftesbury, to the astonishment of the whole House, and of the Duke of York and the king, who were present, rose up in his place and declared, "that he differed *toto cælo* from his colleague ; that he submitted his reason to the House of Commons, so loyal and affectionate," &c., &c. And the Lords, on their meeting

the next day, and not before, thought proper to do no more than thank the king for "referring the points now controverted to a Parliamentary way by bill, that being a good and natural course for satisfaction therein." In the result, the king very wisely broke the seals of the Declaration, appeased the House of Commons, and gave way.

It is a curious point in history to determine what could induce Shaftesbury to make this most fortunate, but most unexpected turn. Hume does not appear to have considered the conduct of this powerful man, on this great occasion, with sufficient attention. In like manner, it is not readily ascertained why Charles did not persevere. It may, however, be made out from Dalrymple, and other sources, that Arlington betrayed the secret of the first treaty to Shaftesbury, and that Shaftesbury must thus have seen that he had been deceived by the king. It appears, too, that the Commons had severely questioned (which, again, shows the importance of constitutional jealousy) Shaftesbury's illegal proceedings, as chancellor, with respect to the writs of election, and that this had alarmed him. Finally, there is exhibited in Dalrymple proof of a very remarkable interference of France, and a letter from the ambassador to Louis, to inform him that he had prevailed with Charles to recall his Declaration of Indulgence.

"The king's speech," says the French ambassador's letter to his court, "was followed with cries and acclamations of joy from the whole Parliament." "The whole people," he continues, "who were already greatly alarmed with the apprehension of a civil war, made bonfires in every street, upon this happy reconciliation of the king and Parliament."

But it was not by such honest effusions, such affecting indications of the wish of the people, if possible, to be on terms of kindness with their sovereign, that the conduct of this detestable monarch was to be influenced; and we see through the remainder of Dalrymple's Memoirs the same base and unprincipled conspiracy carried on against the liberties of mankind, and the same senseless disregard, both in Charles and the renowned Louis, of every thing that could form the proper glory and honor of their reigns.

It is not, however, without the most heartfelt triumph that we observe, in this instance at least, the abominable machinations of the king and his ministers and the French court dissipated and destroyed by the steady integrity and constitutional proceedings of an English House of Commons; and that we see, also, the Dutch republic, though astonished, borne down, and evidently now at the last gasp, rescued at length from slavery and annihilation by the generous despair of its citizens and the heroic patriotism of the Prince of Orange.

This most slight and imperfect sketch of a particular, though most



important, transaction may serve to give some general intimation of what may be expected from a study of the reign of Charles; and it may give you also some notion of the assistance that may be derived from these papers. But if any thing can attach us more to the constitution of our country, and explain to us more particularly the value of the rights and the importance of the duties of the House of Commons, it is this reign, and it is these Memoirs of Dalrymple. The king was ready, if necessary, to destroy the constitution rather than be thwarted; the presumptive heir of the crown had no dearer wish; the people were prepared for subjection by the horrors which they had lately seen result from resistance to the crown; no impediment was opposed but the Parliament, or rather the House of Commons; the House itself was suffered to continue for eighteen years; a great portion of its members were practised upon; a large number of them notoriously bribed;—still the king neither did nor could succeed in his nefarious enterprises; and the patriotic leaders never entirely lost the cause of the constitution, till, on the dissolution of Parliament and on their being left without the means of constitutional resistance, they turned their thoughts to open insurrection, — to open insurrection, though the people had taken part against them, and clearly ranged themselves on the side of the sovereign.

I shall conclude this lecture with observing, that, through the whole of these Memoirs, it is quite gratifying to observe the manner in which the French ambassador and the English negotiators speak and reason about the Parliament. When that enemy is once secured, all is supposed to be safe. In addition to the passages already mentioned, expressions of this kind occur: —

Page 80. — “I found the Duke of York,” says Barillon,\* “in the same sentiments with the Duke of Buckingham with regard to the meeting of the Parliament, having told me of himself, . . . . that, if his advice was followed, they would be very cautious of assembling it.”

Page 99. — “The king has agreed [Sept. 1674] either to prorogue his Parliament till April, 1675, in consideration of five hundred thousand crowns; or, if he convenes it in November, to dissolve it, in case it should refuse to give him money, in consideration of which he is to have a pension of one hundred thousand pounds from France.” All this, it seems, was to enable France to carry on the war, undisturbed by the English Parliament.

Page 105. — “The king of England having convened the Duke of York, the Duke of Lauderdale, and the high treasurer [Danby], to confer with them upon the paper which your Majesty knows of,

\* Not Barillon, but Colbert; “*Monsieur Colbert* represents the Duke of York’s sentiments in the following words: ‘I found,’” &c. Dalrymple (new ed., 1790), I. 122. — Of the extracts which follow, only the last two are from Barillon; the others are taken from despatches of Rouvigny and Courtin. Ibid., 140, 143, 150, 316, and 354. — N.

this last minister asked time to examine it before he gave his opinion upon it. . . . . In fine, the treasurer has been to see the Duke of Lauderdale, to whom he has represented the risk they should run of losing their heads, if they alone were to deliberate upon the treaty, and to sign it. . . . . Sire, your Majesty may well see by all that has passed in this affair, that the king of England is in a manner abandoned by his ministers, even the most confidential. The treasurer fears the Parliament much more than his master. . . . . It will be difficult to conceive that a king should be so abandoned by his subjects. . . . . The Parliaments are to be feared, and it is a kind of miracle to see a king, without arms and money, resist them so long."

Page 112. — "The English king insists for eight hundred thousand crowns, in consideration of which he offers to prorogue the Parliament."

Page 235. — "The king of England tells me that it is time your Majesty should take a resolution, and determine yourself to assist him with a sum of money which might put him in a condition not to receive law from his subjects. . . . . I took this occasion to beg his Britannic Majesty to explain his intentions with regard to the sitting of Parliament," &c., &c. The king, it seems, answered, that he had dissolved the last Parliament, and could put off the meeting of a new one till he could judge of its dispositions to him; but that he could not entirely dispense with them, because he could not hope that the French king would furnish all the sums necessary to support him long without their assistance. "I told him," says Barillon, "that the meetings of Parliament always appeared to me very dangerous," &c., &c.

In another place, Barillon observes, — "What I write to your Majesty will appear, without doubt, very extraordinary; but England has no resemblance to other countries." Happy was it for England that this was the case; and long may unprincipled men like these find every thing to surprise them in its virtuous people and in its free constitution!



## LECTURE XIX.

## CHARLES THE SECOND.

IN my last lecture, after calling your attention to the earlier part of the reign of Charles the Second, while the measures of his government were directed by Clarendon, I endeavoured to give you some general notion of the second part of the same reign, and more particularly of the information that might be collected respecting it from different publications, and above all from the papers of Dalrymple.

This second part of his reign is marked by the constitutional struggle between Charles and the patriotic party, and may itself be divided into two parts.

During this first part of the struggle, that to which I have already referred, not only were the liberties of this country in a state of the most extreme peril, but, in consequence of the ambition of Louis the Fourteenth and his connection with Charles, the liberties of Holland also, and the interests of all Europe.

I must now allude to what I consider as the remaining part of this contest between Charles and the friends of civil freedom, when the patriotic leaders had to contend, not only with the king, but also with the Duke of York, and when, on account of the arbitrary nature of the religion of the latter, they were at last driven to the resolution of endeavouring to exclude him from the throne.

During the first period of their contest with the crown, the patriotic leaders must be considered as successful. The king, we may remember, broke the seals of his Declaration and gave way. But during this second period, the event was otherwise; the king could neither be persuaded nor intimidated into any compliance with the wishes of his opponents; and the struggle ended at length in the execution of some of their leaders, and in the ruin of all.

Whatever difference of opinion there may be respecting their intentions and conduct during this latter period (during their struggle with the king on the subject of the exclusion of the Duke of York from the throne), there can be none respecting the merit of their exertions during the former period. Had the king then succeeded, the liberties of England might have perished.

On the whole, the contest by which the reign of Charles the Second is distinguished can be considered as inferior in interest and importance only to that which immediately preceded it, during the era of the Great Rebellion; and such was the necessity of resistance to the son, as well as to the father, that the same Englishmen who hav

loved and revered the memory of Hampden have never ceased to venerate the virtue and respect the patriotism of Sidney and Lord Russell.

The regular historians will give you the detail of the transactions by which this period is rendered so memorable. But you must by all means continue your study of the *Memoirs of Dalrymple*, which contain very curious information, and will give you very important hints respecting the characters and views of the Duke of York, the king, and the popular leaders. I had originally made large extracts to exemplify what I say, but I omit them, and depend on your consulting such original documents as I have mentioned, yourselves.

As far as principle is concerned, it is the duke, not Charles, who appears to be the man of principle; it is he who is a bigot to his opinions, religious and political, — to Popery and arbitrary power. These, with Charles, were rather the instruments than the objects of his designs; but the duke really had opinions that were dear to him; and he thoroughly and from his heart did detest and abjure all men, principles, and parties that presumed to interfere with the powers that be, either in church or state.

When the duke speaks of the proceedings of Parliament (p. 174), his expressions are, — “His Majesty was forced to prorogue them; and now they are to meet again on Thursday, and I fear they will be very disorderly. . . . Should we have been engaged in a war now, they would have so imposed upon the king as to leave him nothing but the empty name of a king, and no more power than a duke of Venice.”

He and the king had now to meet the due punishment of their conduct, the just consequences of their conspiracies against the laws and constitution of their country; and their perplexities and anxieties can be no proper subject of the slightest sympathy or compassion.

But questions like those comprehended in the Exclusion Bill (whether the regular and presumptive heir shall or shall not ascend the throne) must always be considered as the greatest calamities that can befall a nation; and their very agitation is a complete proof of criminality having existed somewhere, — either in those who have administered the government, or in those who are opposed to them, and generally in the former.

Nothing can be more easy, and nothing can be more true, than to say, that, all government being intended for the good of the whole, the community have a right to deviate from the line of succession when the presumptive heir is a just subject of their apprehension. But what, in the mean time, are to be the sentiments of the existing government and of that presumptive heir? What sort of acquiescence or degree of patriotism is to be expected from them? It is in vain to suppose that questions of this tremendous nature can be de-



aided by the mere reasonableness of the case, or either settled or discussed without imminent hazard to the peace and prosperity of the country.

The popular leaders contended for the exercise of this great right of society, for entire exclusion; the king proposed the most reasonable limitations; the question was, therefore, rendered as fit a subject for debate as it could possibly become; and as there were men of the greatest ability in the Houses, no proceedings in Parliament can be more interesting than these must always be to every Englishman who has reflected upon the critical nature of our own mixed and of all mixed governments.

On whatever side the question could be viewed, the difficulties were very great. The popular part of the constitution was almost as much asserted by the limitations as by the exclusion, since the right of the community to interfere and control the executive power was acknowledged in either case. In argument, however, the exclusionists had the advantage over those who were contented with limitations, because their measure was evidently in practice the only complete remedy for the evil supposed, and the only remedy which could provide at the same time (a most material consideration) for the safety of those who were to administer it. Still, it was, on the whole, impossible that the exclusion should be carried while the king proposed limitations.

The character of the king led the exclusionists to suppose, that, if they remained firm, he would give way. This was their great political mistake. For once in his life, as the point of duty was at least dubious, he was steady to his supposed principle; he kept his word. Had the exclusionists turned short, and accepted his limitations, he had been indeed embarrassed.

It is now clear, from Dalrymple and Macpherson, that not only the Duke of York reprobated the scheme of limitations, but that the king himself was not sincere in his offers; and this must, indeed, have been suspected by the popular leaders. But the truth is, that their cause, as it could not be carried without the *full* coöperation of the public, was from the first not a little hopeless. The nation had but just escaped from all the sufferings of civil war, — from anarchy, usurpation, and military despotism; it is naturally, from the general sobriety of its habits both of speculation and conduct, dutiful and loyal; is always very properly attached to the hereditary nature of the monarchy; nor is it ever the natural turn of men, more especially of bodies of men, or of a whole nation, to provide against future evils by extraordinary expedients, in themselves a sort of evil, in themselves exposed to objection, and in every respect difficult and disagreeable. The conduct, therefore, to be pursued by the king was plain, and the result much what might have been expected. He kept at issue with his Parliaments, making to them reasonable, though

not sincere offers, and addressing them with temper and dignity; till at last the public, as will always be the case when there is a proper exercise of skill and prudence on the part of the sovereign, sided with him, and left the constitution (as usual) to its fate, and the patriots to their fortunes.

This is a very curious part of our history, and should be attentively considered. The king, having dissolved two Parliaments rapidly, issued a Declaration, which was made public and read in the churches. It contained the defence of his conduct, and his appeal to the people. It is given only in substance by the historians; in Kennet, however, the words of it appear. It is very improperly omitted by Cobbett. All the material parts are given, in the words of it, by the historian Ralph.

A very full and spirited reply was drawn up by the leaders of the House of Commons, chiefly by Sir William Jones, under whose name it was published, and who was one of the most distinguished lawyers and speakers of the time. The substance of this reply is in Ralph; but the whole of it is in the appendix of Cobbett. It is long, and some parts of it may be read more slightly than others; but it is in general highly deserving of attention, not only because it is necessary to the explanation of the great constitutional questions then before the public, but because it shows that the notions of intelligent men with regard to the constitution itself were very fully adjusted before the Revolution in 1688, and were, at that great epoch, rather confirmed than altered or improved.

But the reasonings of Sir William Jones were of no effect. "The king," says the historian Ralph (Vol. i. p. 589), "had the advantage of the dispute. His condescending to appeal to his people softened their hearts, if it did not convince their understandings; he appeared to be an object of compassion; he appeared to have been all this while on the defensive. The offers he had made were thought more weighty than his adversaries' objections. In short, he was no sooner pitied than he was believed; and, above all, the artful turn given in his Declaration to the Commons' vote in favor of the Non-conformists drew in all the clergy and their followers to his side in a body. The cry of 'Church and king' was again renewed, was echoed from one end of the kingdom to the other; and, as if it was a charm to debase the spirit and cloud the understanding, produced," says the historian, "such a train of detestable flatteries to the throne, mingled with so many flagrant proofs of a sordid disposition to enter into a voluntary vassalage, as might very reasonably make an Englishman blush for his country while he read them, and would have made a Roman or a Spartan exclaim, 'The gods created these barbarians to be slaves.'"

The address of our own University on this occasion may be seen in Ralph, and the anathemas of the sister University two years after-



wards, in Rapin or Kennet. At Cambridge they were tolerably satisfied, when they had laid down, with due earnestness, first, the merits of the king (that is, of Charles the Second), and then the doctrine of passive obedience. But at Oxford the tenets of loyalty were announced in a far more effectual manner; a "judgment and decree passed against certain pernicious books and damnable doctrines, destructive to the sacred persons of princes, their state and government, and of all human society"; certain propositions are produced, — some few of the twenty-seven that are brought forward, no doubt, to be reprobated, and some few despised, but many of them the common political maxims of the Whigs; the compact, &c.; but all and every one of them were now pronounced "to be false, seditious, and impious, and most of them to be also heretical and blasphemous," &c., &c. The members of the University are to be interdicted from reading the books containing them; the books themselves to be publicly burnt, &c., &c.

"And now the flood-gates of loyalty being opened," says Ralph (p. 592), . . . . "the gazettes from the middle of May to the January following," that is, from the publication of the Declaration, "are little more than a collection of testimonies that the people were weary of all those rights and privileges that make subjection safe and honorable." Quotations, to show the folly of some, the prostitution of all, would be endless; and at last it seems even Lord Halifax, the minister, turned squeamish, and grew sick of them.

Whatever difficulty may belong to the question of the Exclusion Bill, and whether it might or might not have been necessary at the time, still, if we consider what had long been the known characters of Charles and James, the licentiousness of the court, its connection with France (which had been publicly proved in the course of Danby's impeachment), its measures through the whole of the reign, and the idea then entertained of the deadliness of the sin of Popery, it must be confessed that the manner in which the community totally deserted the leaders of the House of Commons on this occasion was not very creditable to the national character. The result was a new temptation to the political virtues of the king, in which, as usual, he failed. Instead of justifying the unbounded and headlong attachment of his people, by showing in his turn a due care and veneration for their constitutional rights, a dishonest advantage was taken of their blind partiality, and the administration of the government became, in every point, as arbitrary and unprincipled as brutal judges, dishonorable magistrates, and wicked ministers, under the patronage and protection of the court, could possibly render it.

And then commenced, in like manner, the temptation of the popular leaders; they had been defeated, — what were they to do? The measures of the court were detestable; this must be allowed. The constitution of England seemed to be, certainly for a season, perhaps

for ever, at an end. Charles might live long, or, as James the Second was to succeed, the violations of the law might by prescription become the law. All this was true, and might very naturally affect the popular leaders with sentiments of the deepest mortification and sorrow; more especially as they saw that the public had abandoned them, and, with some few exceptions, everywhere continued to abandon them. But what, then, was the effect produced on the minds of the patriotic leaders? Instead of reflecting how capricious a master they served, when the public was that master, — how prone to run into extremes, how easily deceived, how little either able or disposed to take care of itself, how pardonable in its follies because always honest in its intentions, — instead of meditating on topics so obvious as these, most of the popular leaders, particularly Shaftesbury, seemed to have lost on this occasion all temper and prudence, and to have thought of nothing but an insurrection and force, — an insurrection which was called for only by the rabble in London, — force, which can never be justified, even with right, but under the strongest assurance of success.

And in this manner are we conducted to the last important transaction of the reign, known under the general name of the Ryehouse Plot, — a plot, as it was supposed, of the patriotic leaders against the king. It appears, however, to have been rather a treasonable plot and insurrection intended by the lower and more desperate members of the party, and countenanced by Shaftesbury, than a regular project formed by the whole party, the more respectable leaders included.

But these machinations, however various their description, were fatal to many who were connected with them; — they were fatal to Algernon Sidney and Lord Russell. These distinguished men were tried for treason, and found guilty, — with what propriety I cannot now discuss. Sidney marched to the scaffold as to a victory, displaying at his execution, as on his trial, all the bold and sublime traits of the republican character: the steady step, the serene eye, the untroubled pulse, the unabated resolve, “the unconquerable mind, and freedom’s holy flame”; the memory, that still lingered with delight on the good old cause, as he termed it, for which he was to shed his blood; the imagination, that, even in the moments of death, disdainful alike of the government, its judges, its indictments, and its executioners, soared away to some loftier code of justice and of right, and hung enamoured on its own more splendid visions of equality and freedom.

The spectators presumed not to shed tears in the presence of Sidney, but their tears had bedewed the scaffold of Lord Russell; Lord Russell, the amiable and the good; the husband, with whom the bitterness of death was past when the partner of his bosom had looked her last farewell; the friend, whom the faithful Cavendish would have



died to save; the lover of truth, the lover of England; the patriot, who had labored to *assert*, not *change*, her constitution; filled with no images of liberty, as Sidney had been, drawn from the imperfect models of Greece and Rome, but intent on a monarchy restrained by popular freedom, and on popular freedom civilized by a monarchy; imprudent, rather than criminal; a memorable instance to show that they who would serve their country are not to mix their own good intentions and virtuous characters with those of men of doubtful principles, irregular and violent in their spirit, — men whom it is idle for them to suppose they can long control, and whose faults they may discern clearly, but by no means their ultimate designs.

Such was the termination of the struggle between prerogative and privilege, which, after all the horrors of the Civil War, it is most afflicting and mortifying to observe, had, in the first place, once more to be renewed during the reign of the restored monarch, and, in the second, to terminate entirely against the patriotic cause.

I now consider myself as having arrived at the close of the reign of Charles. But I have passed by many transactions, both curious and important, not only because they were too numerous to mention, but because I was unwilling to have your attention withdrawn for a moment from the great subject of the reign, — the resistance of the popular leaders to Charles, and more especially the measure of the Exclusion Bill. Those transactions omitted by me — the bribes received, as appears from Dalrymple, by the popular leaders, the Habeas Corpus Act, the Test Act, the Popish Plot — must be well observed by you. I will say a word on the last. This most extraordinary affair may reasonably excite the curiosity, but will in vain exercise the inquiries of the most laborious student. It was impossible at the time, it has been ever since impossible, properly to understand it, or many of the circumstances which so contributed to its success, — for instance, Sir Edmundbury Godfrey's murder.

Instead of laboring to investigate what the fury of those times leaves us little chance of understanding, there is much remains which may be perfectly understood, and to which it may be far more important for you to direct your reflections: I mean the consequences of the plot, the consequences of the alarm excited by this plot; the rage, for instance, and stupidity of which a community are capable when their religious prejudices are worked upon; the outrages that may be committed by judges, juries, and all the regular authorities of a state, the moment that the great maxims and established forms of equity and law are dispensed with; the melancholy excesses of injustice, cruelty, and absurdity, that in times of public alarm may disgrace the most civilized society.

When the more enlightened part of a nation share, for a time, the same violence of prejudice or terror which more naturally belongs to the blind and precipitate passions of the populace, they themselves

become populace, — like the very mob, senseless and ferocious, — and are actually not to be appeased without the shedding of blood. Lord Stafford and others, supposed conspirators in this Popish plot, were therefore formally murdered. The king durst not interpose, nor was he of a temper to disturb his own security in the cause of insulted humanity. It is here that is to be found the unpardonable violence, the criminality, of the popular leaders. The penetrating Shaftesbury becomes either an atrocious statesman, or a blind and vulgar demagogue ; and even the amiable and virtuous Russell is, for a season, no longer to be loved.

The historian Hume, the great chastiser of religious and party animosity, is not likely to desert his reader on an occasion like this ; and it only remains to treasure up his observations, and apply them to every similar instance (and instances will occur) of public infatuation and guilt.

And now, before I turn away from this second part of the reign of Charles, and these private memoirs and original documents, I must remind you of an opinion entertained by some, to which I alluded in my opening lecture, that history neither is nor can be truth, because it professes to give an account of transactions which can be understood only by the actors in the scene. I would wish you, therefore, to consider once more these original papers of Dalrymple. Let them be compared with any of our historians, — for instance, with the judicious History of Ralph. Let the student, after he has by means of Dalrymple put himself into possession of the state secrets of the reign, turn to that History, which was written *before* this publication, and observe what the historian has been able to perform without them. He will then find, as I conceive, that known facts and visible appearances are sufficient to enable a sensible man, without the assistance of these mysteries of office, to form just conclusions, and exhibit those general views which serve all the great and most useful purposes of history. Let him turn, in like manner, to Burnet. I alluded to the inferences to be drawn from his work in yesterday's lecture, and told you I should have to remind you of them. I do so now. The general conclusions which Ralph draws and which Burnet draws, and other historians have drawn, are the very conclusions which we draw ourselves, when, by means of the papers of Dalrymple and the private memoirs, we have become acquainted with all the wretched detail of these disgraceful intrigues. Instances like these (and it is for this purpose that I mention them) may teach us to depend upon all such general inferences as are fairly deduced from a sufficiently comprehensive exhibition of facts, explained and illustrated by the acknowledged principles of human nature ; that is, to depend on diligence, candor, and sagacity, when exercised on the consideration of the affairs of the world ; that is, in other words, to depend on well written history.



On the whole, then, to recapitulate what I have hitherto said, the struggle between the sovereign and the patriotic leaders is the great subject during the latter part of the reign; the designs of Charles against the constitution, and his connections with Louis the Fourteenth, during the preceding part of the reign; the settlement of the kingdom in church and state, under the administration of Clarendon, during the first part of the reign.

Having now alluded to these, each in its order, I must, lastly, introduce my hearers to what I will call, for the sake of distinction, the moral part of the history of this period.

All wars destroy the morals of mankind, by habituating them to refer every thing to force, and by necessitating them so often to dispense with the ordinary suggestions of sympathy and justice. But this is peculiarly the effect of civil wars, where the moral obligations, before the contest, have been more completely established, and are yet, during the contest, with more than ordinary violence, torn asunder. That regular occupation of the mind, amid the common pursuits of life, — those peaceful habits of thought, which are so nutritive, so necessary, to most of the virtues of the human character, — all these, on occasions of civil war, are most materially disturbed, and even sometimes destroyed; and the military virtues, high virtues no doubt, but which have always been found compatible with the greatest licentiousness, seem alone to survive.

It is, therefore, probable that England, on the Restoration, would have exhibited these unhappy effects of the past disorders, under whatever circumstances the kingdom might have been placed. But still more unfortunately, to complete the general dissolution of manners after this event, the vanquished party, the Puritans and Presbyterians, had always been distinguished, not only, many of them, for the real exercise of the severer virtues, but most of them for a ridiculous affectation of a piety and perfection more than human. Men, always in extremes upon other occasions, were equally so on this; and because the Puritans mistook the true nature of virtue and religion, and rushed headlong in one direction, the Cavaliers could do no less than offend every reasonable precept of both, by hurrying away as violently in the other; because the most sacred and awful terms which our religion affords were used by the one party on the most unworthy occasions, and to purposes the most familiar, their opponents could do no better, it seems, than become scoffers at all religion, and could find no substitute for cant, hypocrisy, and nonsense, but profaneness and infidelity.

These great features of the times have not escaped the notice of our historians and moral writers. On this subject, I must refer you to their observations. I may, however, remark, that, if any of my hearers should become very conversant in the history and in the writings of this singular period, he will soon, as I conceive, be but

too conscious that the very actors in the scene often impart to it an unworthy charm, from the liveliness of their licentiousness, from the variety, the brilliancy, the strength of their restless and striking characters. It is one, and not the least, of the many trials which virtue has to encounter, that she is liable to be seduced from her more tranquil, but happier path, by the imposing bustle, the entertaining whims, the ever-changing, careless, animating revelry, which may generally be found in the haunts of her most fatal enemies.

Such was the effect of the fascinating manners and specious qualities of Charles, that he was never hated or despised in the degree which he deserved. Even at this distance of time, we may not readily bring ourselves to entertain sentiments sufficiently severe against the king, the courtiers, and all the considerable personages that appeared during these critical times. The truth is, that this period was marked by a sort of conspiracy against all sobriety and order, against all liberty and law, against all dignity and happiness, public and private; and we must not suffer our taste for pleasantries, and our admiration of shining talents, to betray us into a forgetfulness of every graver virtue which can seriously occupy our reflection or engage our respect.

But I must be allowed to make one observation more, which I shall leave to your own examination. The writers on morals have always insisted, that vice has at least no advantage over virtue, but the contrary, even in this life. The period of history now before us is enlivened by the most striking and the most profligate characters, and will, as I conceive, abundantly illustrate this position, — a position certainly founded in nature and truth, and which no man ever acted upon — and repented.

The Buckingham, for instance, of these times, the author of *The Rehearsal*, and the delight of the court, “the life of pleasure and the soul of whim,” but the most unprincipled of men, was the Villiers of Pope, — the great Villiers, who, though he died not “in the worst inn’s worst room,” died “victor of his health, of fortune, friends, and fame,” and well fitted “to point a moral or adorn a tale.”

Rochester, at the early age of three-and-thirty, when his talents might have been ripening into strength, and his virtues into usefulness, sunk into the grave amid the wild waste of his existence and his advantages, and discovered how mistaken had been his estimate of happiness, when it was too late.

In a grander style of misconduct appears the celebrated Shaftesbury. Of powers as universal as his ambition was unbounded, — the idol of the rabble at Wapping, the wit and man of fashion among the courtiers at Whitehall, and a statesman in the House of Lords, whom the king, after listening to him in a debate, pronounced fit to teach his bishops divinity and his judges law, — a minister, a patriot, a chancellor, and a demagogue, — in whatever direction he moved, the



man on whom all eyes were to be turned, — to whom nothing was wanting but virtue, — Shaftesbury died at last an exile from his country, seeking protection from that very republic of Holland which in the hour of his corruption and prosperity he had denounced; towering with all the consciousness of genius, yet humiliated by the triumphs of opponents whom he must have despised even more than he hated, and no longer able to hope, as the scene for ever closed around him, either for the gratification of success, or the comforts (for such, to his unchastened mind, they would have been thought) of vengeance.

Compare with the lives of these men the life of Sir William Temple, — the man of cultivated mind, — the man of sense and humanity, — of civilized passions, and well-directed aims, — the philosopher and the statesman, appearing on the stage of public affairs only to be honored, retiring to the shade only to be more loved and applauded, — the minister who could speak the language of patriotism and truth to his corrupted, dissembling sovereign, nor yet suffer himself, by disappointment at this sovereign's subsequent conduct, to be hurried into projects of dangerous experiment and doubtful ambition, — and who, on every occasion, converted all the advantages, which he had received from nature and from fortune, to their noblest purposes, the fair fame and happiness of himself, the honor of his country, and the benefit of mankind.

Take, again, an instance of virtue in a form more severe, and apparently less fitted for happiness, — the patriot Andrew Marvell. Of this man it is well known, that the treasurer Danby once made his way to his garret, and, under a proper disguise of courtly phraseology, offered him a bribe. It was refused; and this virtuous representative of the people, when he had turned away from the thousand pounds of the minister, was obliged to dine a second time on the dish of the former day, and borrow a guinea from his bookseller. But which of the two are we to envy?

“Count all the advantage prosperous vice attains,  
’Tis but what virtue flies from and disdains.”

Pursue the same train of inquiry into the recesses of the cabinet. The king had deceived his ministry, the Cabal; Arlington, one of them, betrayed the king. The Duke of York and the king had cajoled Shaftesbury; and Shaftesbury, at the moment he was most wanted, turned short on his deceivers. Danby had preferred his place to his honor, and had committed himself to Montague. At that time they were friends; soon after, enemies; each wished the ruin of the other; but the ambassador, Montague, was more adroit, and the treasurer Danby was lodged in the Tower. What friendship, what happiness, have we here among men like these?

The members of the Cabal gained little by their baseness but disgrace and impeachments. Charles himself was occupied all his life

in extracting money from Louis, and in deceiving him for that purpose; but Louis was equally employed in deceiving Charles, and in carrying on counter intrigues with his subjects. Two years before his death, Charles came to the knowledge of all the French monarch's proceedings: he received, says Dalrymple, a yet more mortifying stroke; he found that the court of France had been capable of intending (though the design was at last laid aside) to make public his secret negotiations with the Duchess of Orléans. What was the result? Conscious that he could no longer be either respected or loved by the intelligent part of his subjects, that he was distrusted and despised by every court in Europe, and that he had been all his life betrayed by the very prince to whom he had sold the immediate jewel of his soul, his secret chagrin became at length visible on his countenance, and for two years before his death, he had ceased to be the merry monarch who could laugh at the virtues and triumph in the vices of mankind.

Charles, in the earlier part of his reign, had seen Clarendon stand before him the representative of English good sense and English good feelings. He had been afterwards exhorted by Temple to be the man of his people; for such a king, the patriot minister told him, (to use his own words,) "might in England be any thing, and otherwise nothing"; but, from the first, Charles had traced out another path of happiness for himself, and in the event, as we may collect from the historians, he found he had judged but ill; he is even understood to have formed serious resolutions of retracing, if possible, his steps, and of acting up to the model which had vainly been presented to his view. But life admits not of this neglect of opportunities: he was struck by the hand of death; and what, then, is his history? The history of a man of pleasure: a fine understanding converted to no useful purpose, and at last, as is always the case, not convertible to any; the common feelings of our nature corrupted into total selfishness by sensual indulgence; the proper relish of the gratifications of our state worn down by abuse into a morbid indifference for every thing; with no friendship that he thought sincere; with no love that he did not hire; without the genuine enjoyment of one social affection, or of one intellectual endowment but his wit; floating helplessly on from one amusement to another; oppressed with the burden of time, yet ashamed of his expedients to get rid of it;—living and dying, Charles is the proper object of our indignation or contempt; through life a conspirator against the liberties of his people, or a mere saunterer amid his courtiers and his mistresses; and on his death-bed delivering himself over to his stupid brother and a Popish priest. Such is the history of Charles; but what is there here which the meanest of his subjects could have to envy,—what to envy in the monarch, however he may be himself, in his humbler station, submitted to the tasks of daily labor, to the duties of self-denial, or the necessities of self-exertion?



But whatever may be our decision with respect to the great position of the moralists, — that vice has no advantage even in this world, but the contrary, — it must at least be admitted, that men like these, whether or not they procure happiness for themselves, undoubtedly produce misery to every one around them; in private life they injure, distress, or corrupt whatever is within their influence, and in public they are yet more injurious to society, by disposing of their talents and integrity, under some form or other, to the best bidder.

Some idea of the effect which such men produce on society may be derived from the dramatic representations in the reign of Charles; compositions which, therefore, form a part of its history.

“The wits of Charles found easier ways to fame,  
Nor wished for Jonson's art or Shakspeare's flame:  
Themselves they studied; as they felt, they writ:  
Intrigue was plot, obscenity was wit.”

If such were the dramas, what were the audience? If such was the picture of life, as it was then understood, what was, and what had been, the influence of the higher orders?

In an age of such depravity, the great minister Clarendon was not unconscious of what was due to his sovereign, to his country, or to his own character; and he resisted, by every effort in his power, the immoralities of his master, and the licentiousness of the court. His gravity, as it was called, was the great object at which the ridicule of Buckingham and the wits was eternally levelled; but the chancellor was of a temperament too dignified to be faced out of his principles either by the frowns of the king or the grimaces of his companions. He would never suffer his wife to visit the Lady, as he calls her, that is, the king's mistress; and he continued, as he began, the champion of the ordinary duties of life.

In our own times, the great upholder of the domestic virtues has been, not any particular minister, but the monarch himself, — George the Third. To whatever variety of criticism a reign like his, so long and so eventful, may be hereafter exposed, this praise, this solid praise, will never be denied him; and it will remain, while the story of England remains, an honor to his memory. His people, in the mean time, have never been backward in acknowledging their obligation. His conduct in this respect has always been the theme of their loud and just panegyric; and they have never ceased to look up to the throne, not only with sentiments of loyalty to the high office, but with feelings of gratitude and respect for the person of their sovereign.

Among many other amusing, rather than improving, works connected with the reign of Charles the Second, must be particularized the *Memoirs of the Comte de Grammont*, written by one of the Hamiltons. The narrative and the pleasantry are airy and elegant,

often reminding us of the manner of Voltaire ; and the work may be read, as giving a picture of the court and courtiers of Charles, drawn from the life, telling their own story in their own way, and therefore containing not only a delineation of their intrigues, occupations, and pleasures, but of their modes of reasoning and thinking, and the sympathies and principles, such as they were, upon which this licentious and but too entertaining part of society at that time proceeded. Courage seems to have been their only virtue, liveliness their only merit, — the manners of Chesterfield, and the morals of Rochefoucauld.

An exhibition of the feelings and reasonings of the king and his courtiers on the graver subjects of national policy may be found in the poems of Dryden ; the powerful advocate of any and of every cause, whose affluent mind and pregnant fancy were never without an argument and an image, whatever might be the topic either of his poetry or his prose ; worthy to be the assertor of the best interests of mankind, and sometimes enforcing them with the most enviable spirit and success ; the master of a lyre, no doubt, whose song can never die, — whose numbers are always easy, airy, and melodious, — often breaking away into passages of the most striking vigor, and sometimes kindling into flashes of the most genuine sublimity ; yet a poet, it must at the same time be confessed, whose compositions are often debased by coarseness and disfigured by extravagance, and who was ready, when occasion required, to give plausibility and force to the most wretched commonplaces of servility or licentiousness, of bigotry or superstition. He who reads his great poetical pamphlet, the *Absalom and Achitophel*, after having previously acquainted himself with the history and characters of the time, will perceive, that, however he may have admired it before, he may still be said never before to have read it ; and he will neither wonder at the great name which the poet has transmitted to posterity, nor deny him the highest prerogative of genius, — the power of stamping on his works the impression of immortality, and of giving a value that shall never cease to productions which originally served the fleeting purposes of the day.

To find contrasts for the *Memoirs of Grammont*, the compositions of the drama, and the writings of Dryden and the wits, — to see the extremes of which human nature is capable, — we may turn from these productions, and consult Grey's notes to *Hudibras*, and *Hudibras* itself, with such sermons of the Presbyterian divines, and such public papers of Presbyterian statesmen, as have reached us.

As a close to the whole of our inquiries, we may direct our attention to the *History of Scotland* by Laing, a work which will be found often contributing to explain and illustrate the reign of Charles the First, but absolutely necessary in considering the reign of Charles the Second.



Laing is a writer who throws out his opinions so freely and so strongly, on subjects so various and so important, that, from the impossibility of all comment, they must be left by me entirely unnoticed. But it is necessary to observe, that the style, which is at first somewhat repulsive, will be found materially to improve, as the work proceeds, and at length cease to remind us of the disagreeable, abstract manner, and of many of the faults of Gibbon. The narrative is necessarily encumbered not a little with Church history; and, as it places human nature in no new light on these occasions, may in these places be slightly perused.

Laing is not considered as a writer favorable to the Stuarts; but how could he, if fit to write at all, be favorable? It is in the history which he details that the faults of these princes are most unequivocally displayed. Whatever be the excuses for their conduct, which may or may not be found while we read the history of England, they totally disappear when we turn to the annals of Scotland; and from that moment their defence is hopeless.

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## LECTURE XX.

### JAMES THE SECOND.—THE REVOLUTION.

ON the death of Charles the Second, the Duke of York took as peaceable possession of the throne as if no effort had ever been made to debar him from the succession. If the exclusionists had carried their measure, James would always have been represented, by a very large and respectable description of writers, as, on the whole, a victim to party rage. Without, perhaps, denying exactly the right of a community to provide for its own happiness, they would have contented themselves with observing, that religious opinions were in themselves no just disqualification; that it by no means followed, that James, though a Papist himself, would have violated the constitution of his country, rather than not make his subjects the same; that the conduct of men altered with their situation; and that, at all events, the patriotism and good sense of James were not fairly tried.

But, happily for one of the most important of all causes, the cause of civil liberty, the experiment was really made; and all that the exclusionists had foreseen, all that with very manly wisdom they had endeavoured to prevent, actually took place. When, however, the expectations of the exclusionists were verified, and the arbitrary and

bigoted nature of James was inflamed, rather than pacified, by the possession of power, it by no means followed that the community would then be able to relieve itself from the calamity which it had incurred. It is very easy for a theorist to say, that a nation has only to will to be free, and to be so. The affairs of mankind proceed in no such manner.

On such a subject as the Revolution in 1688 the student will surely think that no pains he can bestow are too great. But he will rise from the whole with very different impressions from what I have done, if he does not entitle this Revolution not only the *glorious*, but, in the first place, the *fortunate*, Revolution of 1688. If he can but place himself in the midst of these occurrences, and suppose himself ignorant of what is to happen, it is with a sort of actual fear and trembling that he will read the history of these times; let him consider what his country has become by the successful termination of these transactions, and what it might have been rendered by a contrary issue; how much the interests of Europe were at this juncture identified with those of England; and what a variety of events, the most slight and the most natural, might have thrown the whole into a state of confusion and defeat.

The first question to be examined is the conduct of James, — his unconstitutional measures, his arbitrary designs.

After the student has perused the history in Hume and Rapin, and compared it with the Parliamentary History of Cobbett, he will see that the indictment that was afterwards preferred against James by the two houses of legislature was strictly founded in fact, point by point. As it is impossible for me to detail the history, not an incident of which is without its importance, I will just state what that indictment was. When the crown was afterwards offered to William and Mary, both houses prefaced their offer by declaring the reasons that compelled them to adopt a measure so extraordinary. They were these; and they form a sort of summary of the reign of James the Second, and therefore I shall read them to you; in every word they deserve attention; they are the case of the people of England on this great occasion: —

“Whereas the late king, James the Second, by the assistance of divers evil counsellors, judges, and ministers, employed by him, did endeavour to subvert and extirpate the Protestant religion, and the laws and liberties of this kingdom; — by assuming and exercising a power of dispensing with and suspending of laws, and the execution of laws, without consent of Parliament; — by committing and prosecuting divers worthy prelates, for humbly petitioning to be excused from concurring to the said assumed power; — by issuing, and causing to be executed, a commission, under the great seal, for erecting a court called ‘The Court of Commissioners for Ecclesiastical Causes’; — by levying money for and to the use of the crown, by pre-



tence of prerogative, for other time and in other manner than the same was granted by Parliament ; — by raising and keeping a standing army within this kingdom, in time of peace, without consent of Parliament, and quartering soldiers contrary to law ; — by causing several good subjects, being Protestants, to be disarmed, at the same time when Papists were both armed and employed contrary to law ; — by violating the freedom of election of members to serve in Parliament ; — by prosecutions in the Court of King's Bench for matters and causes cognizable only in Parliament ; — and by divers other arbitrary and illegal courses : And whereas, of late years, partial, corrupt, and unqualified persons have been returned, and served on juries in trials, and particularly divers jurors in trials for high treason, which were not freeholders ; and excessive bail hath been required of persons committed in criminal cases, to elude the benefit of the laws made for the liberty of the subjects ; and excessive fines have been imposed ; and illegal and cruel punishments inflicted ; and several grants and promises made of fines and forfeitures, before any conviction or judgment against the persons upon whom the same were to be levied : all which are utterly and directly contrary to the known laws, and statutes, and freedom of this realm."

Such were the articles of accusation preferred, and it will be found justly preferred, against James. And thus much for the external facts of his administration. From these the conclusion to the internal principles of his conduct is sufficiently clear ; and the very particulars of these proceedings, such as they have been collected by historians, are all teeming with evidence of a bigotry and a rage for arbitrary power that advanced to a state of perfect infatuation.

With respect to such facts and intrigues as were concealed from the public, sufficient evidence may be seen in Dalrymple of the baseness of their nature, and of their entire hostility to the liberties, civil and religious, of the English nation. This evidence has been made still more abundant by the late publication of Mr. Fox, which contains a new supply of authentic documents from France, and the most interesting letters between the French king and his ambassador, Barillon. The instruction to be derived from these original letters is the same which we have already announced, when we considered the communications that passed between the French court and Charles the Second. We are here, for instance, taught the importance of the two houses of Parliament, particularly the Commons, — the arts by which they were to be managed, the pretences by which they were to be deceived, the topics by which they were to be soothed, the principles by which they were to be betrayed, the expedients by which they were to be corrupted, the obstacle that their meetings and debates always opposed to the designs of the French and English courts, — and, on the whole, the impossibility that schemes of arbitrary power should succeed, while the Parliaments retained the control of the purse, and still preserved their integrity.

Having now, in a general manner, considered the nature of the attack that was made by James on the constitution of the country, which is the first part of the subject, we may next turn to examine the nature of the resistance that was opposed to him, which is the second part. And when this part is considered, the conclusion seems to be, and it is a melancholy conclusion, that, if James had not violated the religious persuasions of his subjects, he would have met with no proper resistance whatever, and that the English nation, after all the sufferings and exertions of their ancestors, would at this period have submitted to such violations of their civil liberties, and would have allowed such precedents to be established, that in the event these liberties might very probably have been lost, like those of the other European monarchies.

The natural guardian of the community was, in the first place, the Parliament. But so successful had been the practices of the king, and of his predecessor, Charles, that, when he looked over the list of the returns, he declared "that there were not more than forty names which he could have wished not there." The Parliament was suffered to sit only a year. Some proper feeling was, indeed, shown, when the king intimated to them (clearly enough) that he meant to maintain a standing army. But their expostulations with the crown in this last address were directed merely against his suspensions and violations of the law in favor of the Papists, — expostulations of the most dutiful kind; to which his Majesty replied by saying he "did not expect such an address"; and when Coke, of Derby, animated for the moment with the remembrance of the better days of the constitution, stood up and said, "he hoped they were all Englishmen, and were not to be frightened out of their duty by a few high words," he was immediately sent to the Tower "for his indecent and undutiful reflecting on the king and this House." The king immediately prorogued the Parliament, and never suffered it again to assemble; and here, for any thing that can be discovered to the contrary, in the honest, unpremeditated effusion of a single representative of the people, might have ended all the efforts that could be made in the cause of the civil liberties of the country.

For from what quarter comes the next resistance to the illegal proceedings of the crown? From the ecclesiastical bodies, — the Charter House, the University of Cambridge, the colleges of Oxford, and the seven bishops, the representatives of the English clergy; that is, from men who had been so lately, at the close of the reign of Charles the Second, the addressers of the crown in the language of servility, and the preachers and the propagators of the doctrine of passive obedience. Happily for the nation, the clergy at this period, venerable in their characters and situation, however mistaken in their political theories, however the teachers of passive obedience, could, after all, resist, when their own acknowledged rights, when their own



established opinions in religion, were endangered ; and the community, on their part, could be roused into some sense of their danger, when they saw the most dignified ministers of their religion, even the prelates of the land, hurried away by officers of justice and consigned to imprisonment in the Tower. The king's own standing army, and the very sentinels who had to guard these peaceful sufferers, participated with the multitude in their sense of religious horror at the king's intolerable violation of all law, privilege, and security, — of every thing that was dear and respectable in the eyes of his subjects.

The fact was, that the age still continued to be an age of religious dispute. In the former part of the century, we saw the sectaries, animated by the religious principle, enter into a contest with the Church of England and the crown ; we now see, by the unexpected direction of the same religious principle, the Church of England itself slowly and heavily moved onward into an opposition to the monarch. Not that the Church had begun to entertain more enlightened notions on the subject of civil obedience, but that the crown had, most fortunately, allied itself to Popery ; and the Church, though it abjured the doctrines of resistance, however modified, abominated with still greater earnestness the tenets and superstitions of the Roman Catholic communion. It is not too much to assert, that the resistance of the people of England to James was *universally* of a religious nature ; of a very large portion of the country, the high Tory and ecclesiastical party, exclusively so.

But, besides these, there was another great division of the nation, of which the resistance was not exclusively of a religious nature. The resistance here was compounded ; it was not only of a religious, but also, and very properly, of a civil nature. This party was the Whig party, the exclusionists, who, like Coke of Derby, were not to be put down by high words. These, however fallen and trampled upon since the victory of Charles the Second and the accession of James, still existed, though discountenanced and in silence ; and they must, no doubt, have observed with pleasure their cause strengthening as the king proceeded, and new prospects arising of civil happiness to their country from the religious fury of their arbitrary monarch, the very prince whom they had endeavoured, from an anticipation of his character and designs, to exclude from the throne.

So much for the resistance which the king experienced at home. The next great division of the subject is the resistance which James experienced from abroad.

Charles the Second, in a most fortunate moment of improvidence, had suffered his minister Danby to connect the Prince of Orange with the royal family of England. If James had no male children, the wife of William thus became first in succession. Even if he had, she remained so, in case the direct male line was to be departed from.

The great enemy of the civil and religious liberties of Europe was, at that time, Louis the Fourteenth; their great hero, William. William had seen his own country nearly destroyed, when he had to defend it or perish in the last dike. The great assistants of Louis had been Charles and James. Between William and Louis there could be no peace, and only the appearance of amity between William and his father-in-law, James.

In the situation of England, all eyes were naturally turned upon this great and hitherto successful assertor of the rights of mankind. William, on his part, could not but be perfectly alive to any representations that reached him from a country like England.

The communications that passed cannot now be thoroughly known. This was to be expected. But some idea of them may be formed from the publication of Dalrymple. Much of the intercourse between William and the patriots must have been of a verbal nature, carried on by his two agents, Dyckvelt and Zuylistein, men of address and ability, whom, under different pretences, he sent over into England.

The letters in Dalrymple must, of course, be examined. Dalrymple speaks of them as showing that "there are few great families in this country, who will not find that their ancestors, of whatever party they were, had a hand in the Revolution, in one way or other." To me they appear to show nothing of the sort; making every allowance for the necessity of concealment and caution, they are neither so many nor so strong as might have been expected; and it is not a little remarkable that the great families of this country have never produced any letters or memoirs to illustrate the more secret history of these extraordinary times. I am not aware of any means that we have to gratify the curiosity with which we so naturally turn to inquire after the more secret intrigues that concurred in producing this memorable event of the Revolution.

Among the letters produced by Dalrymple, there are more from the Tory lords than could have been looked for; but the association for joining William, if he came over, was, after all, not sent till the end of June, 1688;—he landed in November;—and was at last only signed in cipher by four lords, Devonshire, Danby, Shrewsbury, and Lumley; two commoners, Mr. Sidney and Admiral Russell; and one bishop, the Abdiel of the Bench, Compton, then Bishop of London.

The seven patriots just mentioned (there were no more), to whom we are so deeply indebted, assure William in their letter, that "there are nineteen parts of twenty of the people throughout the kingdom who are desirous of a change; . . . . that much the greatest part of the nobility and gentry are as much dissatisfied; . . . . and very many of the common soldiers do daily show such an aversion to the Popish religion, that there is the greatest probability imaginable of great numbers of deserters which would come from them [the gov-



ernment], should there be such an occasion; and amongst the seamen, it is almost certain, there is not one in ten who would do them any service in such a war."

But here we ought certainly to ask, How, after all, was the Prince of Orange to attempt any regular enterprise against the crown of England? Observe his difficulties, and you will then understand his merit. He was at the head of only a small republic; that republic had been reduced, but a few years before, to the very last extremities by the arms of Louis. How was William to prepare an expedition, and not be observed by the French and English monarchs? how to prosecute it, and not be destroyed by their power? If he attacked England with a small force, how was he to resist James? if with a large one, how was Holland, in his absence, to resist Louis? In either case, how was he to extricate himself from the English and French fleets, which might prevent his landing in the first place, or at least render his return impossible in the second? How could he expect that the English, who had so long contended for the empire of the seas with their great rivals, the Dutch, would forego the triumph of a naval victory, if it was once put within their reach? How was William to trust to the representations of the English patriots, who might be suspected of judging of their countrymen through the medium of their own wishes and resentments? How was he to expect, even if he landed, that the gentry and nobility would hazard their lives and fortunes by appearing in arms, when only seven of them had as yet ventured, by any distinct act, to incur the guilt of treason? What spirit of freedom, much more of resistance, had the nation shown, now for seven years, since the political victory of Charles the Second over the exclusionists? Monmouth, the idol of the English populace, had just been destroyed by James without difficulty; so had Argyle. What was to be expected from a country that was loud, indeed, in their abuse of Popery, but whose pulpits, and public meetings, and courts of justice, resounded with the doctrines of passive obedience, and whose very Parliaments seemed to admit the same fatal principles?

Put the case, that William should even succeed so far as to oblige James to call a Parliament, give up his illegal pretensions, and promise conformity to the laws in future. To what end or purpose, as far as William himself was concerned? what benefit was to accrue to *him*, but the mere liberty of returning? while James was to be left, in silence and at his leisure, to wait for more favorable times, watch his opportunities, recover his authority, and persecute and destroy, one by one, all who had contributed to resist or modify his prerogative.

It is by reflections of this kind alone, I must repeat, that we can be taught duly to estimate the merits of William. The difficulties of the enterprise show the greatness of his genius, and the extent of our

obligation. As far as the Continent was concerned, some idea may be formed of the merits of William from a chapter in Somerville (the eighth), and they may be still further investigated in Tindal. It is true, that many favorable circumstances concurred to enable William to combine the discordant materials around him to his purpose; but the sagacity, activity, and steadiness, with which he availed himself of every advantage which fortune offered him, were above all praise.

So much for the resistance to James from abroad, preparatory to the enterprise of William.

Some assistance may be derived from Burnet, particularly in the next stage of our inquiry, the enterprise itself. Burnet had all the merits, and all the faults, of an ardent, impetuous, headstrong man, whose mind was honest, and whose objects were noble. Whatever he reports himself to have heard or seen, the reader may be assured he really did hear or see. But we must receive his representations and conclusions with that caution which must ever be observed when we listen to the relation of a warm and busy partisan, whatever be his natural integrity and good sense. He is often censured and sometimes corrected; but the fact seems to be, that, without his original, and certainly honest account, we should know little about the events and affairs he professes to explain. Many of the writers who are not very willing to receive his assistance would be totally at a loss without it.

One of the first remarks to be made on this enterprise is, that, with an armament that stretched out to the distance of twenty miles, William was not prevented by the English fleet from landing at Torbay.

But the second remark is most highly discreditable to the English nation. William landed, and was not joined; and seems to have remained a whole week at and about Exeter, without any material assistance or countenance either from the clergy or gentry, nobility or people. It is well that he did not retire, as he once thought to have done, while to retire was in his power. But perhaps it struck him (very properly), that, though nothing was done for him, nothing was done against him; that the king, with his thirty thousand men, did not, after all, appear and drive him and his fourteen thousand foreigners into the sea.

We know something, but not much, of the secret history of the court during this critical period.

There is a Diary by the *second* Earl of Clarendon, published with his letters. Clarendon was connected with the royal family, and seems to have put down, from time to time, some of the facts that passed before him, and some of the thoughts that occurred to him. Any genuine living account of this sort, however scanty, or by whatever person made, cannot be otherwise than interesting. It is mixed



up, too, with all the particulars of his own concerns and petty engagements; and what little, therefore, is said must be considered as said without art or affectation, and therefore the proper subject of observation.

The Diary begins to contain passages of interest at the forty-first page, in May, 1688. What appears confirms the general accounts given by the historians.

The great question is, why the king did not take more vigorous measures to prepare for the approach of the Prince of Orange; or afterwards, when the Prince really had landed, to drive him out of the country.

"September 24, Monday," says Lord Clarendon, "I went to the king's levee. . . . He told me the Dutch were now coming to invade England in good earnest. I presumed to ask if he really believed it; to which the king replied with warmth, 'Do I see you, my lord?' . . . 'And now, my lord,' said he, 'I shall see what the Church of England men will do.'" Again: "October 16, Tuesday, I was at the king's levee. . . . His Majesty told me he had letters yesterday from Holland, that the Dutch troops were all embarked," &c., &c. "'You will all find,'" added the king, "'the Prince of Orange a worse man than Cromwell.'" So that the king seems to have been fully aware, though late, of his danger.

At last appeared the Declaration of the Prince of Orange, and then the king perceived that the ground was hollow under him. "November 2, Friday. The Archbishop," says the Diary, "and Bishop of London were with the king, having been sent for; there were likewise present the Bishops of Durham, Chester, and St. David's. The king showed them the Prince of Orange's Declaration, and bade Lord Preston read that clause which says, that he was invited over by several of the lords spiritual and temporal. They all, as I have been told, assured the king the contrary. The king said he believed them, and was very well satisfied. He told them he thought it necessary they should make some declaration, expressing their dislike of the Prince's coming in this manner, and that they should bring it to him as soon as was possible." But the bishops, after all, never did nor would express any such dislike.

At the end of this volume, in the appendix, there are some very curious particulars of what passed between the king and the bishops on the subject of distributing and reading his Majesty's Declaration of Indulgence; and again, on the subject last mentioned, when the king required from them an abhorrence of the designs of the Prince of Orange, the particulars are remarkable. He seems to have begun with Compton, the Bishop of London, and to have closeted him first. This bishop had, in fact, signed the invitation to the Prince of Orange, it may be remembered; he was one of the seven. The king read to him the short paragraph in the Prince's Declaration, where

the lords *spiritual*, as well as temporal, are mentioned, as having invited him over. The moment must have been trying; but the prelate had been a soldier in his youth, and seems to have faced the enemy with steadiness in the first place, and then to have drawn off his forces with all due expedition and decorum. "I am confident," he replied to the king, "that the rest of the bishops would as readily answer in the negative as myself." His Majesty then said he believed them all innocent, but he expected a declaration of that innocence, and an abhorrence. "That is a matter to be considered," said the prelate. It was considered; conferences were held. A very singular dialogue followed between his Majesty and his prelates, and it might soon have been very clear to the monarch, that the trial of seven of them in Westminster Hall, and the imprisonment in the Tower, whatever might be the passive nature of their obedience, neither could nor would be forgotten, when *active* exertions were required from them.

James; too, must have perceived, or thought that he perceived, that his army could not be trusted; and that, however he might despise their theological learning, they would probably think it a point of honor not to fight against what they considered as their religion.

On the whole, it appears from the Diary, that the king had received the account of the Prince's landing the day after he had effected it, — that is, on the 6th of November, — and that it was not till the evening of the 17th that he set off to join his army at Sarum.

There is a book sometimes quoted by historians, — the Memoirs of Sir John Reresby; it is worth reading. Sir John was attached to the royal family, and had always lived about the court. He says what he has to say with ease and without affectation, never enters into any profound or long discussions, but gives an account of his life and proceedings in Parliament in much the same agreeable, sensible manner that a man of this character would tell his story in conversation, to any of his friends to whom he chose to be communicative, if not entirely confidential. Sir John's words are these: — "The king, . . . . not knowing whom to trust, returned to Andover on the 24th [of November], where he sat at supper with Prince George of Denmark, his son-in-law, and the Duke of Ormond; but, to the surprise of all men, they both deserted him that very night and withdrew to the Prince, together with others of good note and account. . . . . Now the number of all that thus forsook the king did not as yet amount to one thousand; but such a mutual jealousy now took birth, that there was no relying on any one, no knowing who would be true and honest to the cause; wherefore the army and artillery were ordered to retire back towards London, where his Majesty arrived on the 26th." Such is the account of Sir John.

But for the king to fall back on London, without opposing the progress of those whom he had considered in his proclamation as



rebels and invaders, was to leave his partisans no hope, and his enemies no fear.

The Prince had landed on the 5th, but it was not till the 15th that the gentlemen of Somersetshire and Dorsetshire had joined him in sufficient numbers to be collected together in a body, and to be publicly addressed. It was not till the 16th that Lord Delamere appeared in favor of the Prince of Orange in Cheshire; only at the same instant that the Earl of Devonshire declared for him at Derby. It was not till the 22d that York was surprised by Lord Danby, and about the same time that a great number of the nobility and gentry at Nottingham published the resolution to join the Prince of Orange, "for the recovery," as they said, "of their almost ruined laws, liberties, and religion."

Not only were the people of England thus tardy (so tardy, that, in any ordinary case of tyranny in the monarch, the fate of the contest would in the mean time have been decided), but it is observable, that it is only in this last public paper from Nottingham that the feelings of men who thought they had been insulted as well as injured really appear. In this Nottingham manifesto some flashings of the spirit of Colonel Hutchinson are still visible. "We own it rebellion," they say, "to resist a king that governs by law, but he has been always accounted a tyrant that has made his will his law.—They hoped all good Protestant subjects would, with their lives and fortunes, be assistant to them, and not be bugbeared with the opprobrious terms of rebels, by which the court would fright them to become perfect slaves to their tyrannical insolences and usurpations."

Had the general strain of the papers that were published at this time been of this kind, been as worthy of Englishmen as was this, the Prince of Orange could have found no material difficulty, whatever had been the measures which James pursued. But the general expression of the public sentiment was of the most distant and temperate kind: what was called for was the Protestant religion, and the laws and liberties of the country; but above all, the summoning of a free Parliament, to which the settlement of every difficulty and grievance was to be entirely intrusted. If we consider the offensive outrages of James, we must allow that the effect of the Civil Wars was now discernible in the temperament of the nation; and they who insist, that, after a convulsion, the restoration of the old dynasty is the worst calamity that can happen to the liberties of a country, may here find no inconsiderable illustration of the general propriety of this opinion.

Had James stood firm and called a Parliament, and abode by the event, it is difficult to say what material advantage could have ultimately resulted to the constitution of the country; but, most happily, the same civil wars that so impressed upon the people of England the terrors of anarchy and military usurpation contributed no less forcibly

to impress on the mind of James the images of the trial and execution of the monarch. By a most fortunate want of political sagacity, he thought it his best policy to fly from the country, and leave it in confusion, — the more complete, he thought, the better. The result, he supposed, would be, that he should be recalled to settle it, or that, at all events, he might thus preserve himself and the royal family, and, by the assistance of Ireland, Scotland, and Louis, be hereafter in a condition to return to it.

Lord Clarendon was attached to James, Burnet to William. From a comparison of the accounts of both a very sufficient idea may be formed of the very singular situation of every thing, just before and during the Interregnum.

Lord Clarendon and others were aware of the mistake which James was committing, and they labored to prevent it. By an extraordinary indulgence of fortune, James had to commit his mistake not only once, but even a second time; he fled, and was stopped at Feversham; he returned to London, and retired once more. After flying the first time, he was alarmed into a flight the second; and it is evident, that, if he had on the last occasion resisted, he could not have been compelled to fly, and that the Prince and the cause of the Revolution might soon have been in a state of the most irretrievable embarrassment and ruin.

The prudence and skill of William continued as perfect as they were in James defective. A House of Commons was peaceably formed, and the convention of the two estates assembled.

And now begins the last and not the least curious scene of all, — in some respects the most so; for what was now the result? The Church party and the Tory party, when James was gone and the danger removed, renewed their doctrines of passive obedience and the indefeasible tenure of the crown. Scripture, law, custom, seemed equally to confirm their tenets. “Be subject to the higher powers”; “The king can do no wrong”; “The crown of England never was nor ever can be considered as elective”; — these were their positions, and these the Whig party and the friends of the Prince knew not well how to deny; but they could see plainly that all was lost, if they were acted upon. From the first, therefore, they had seized upon the mistake of the king, his departure from the country, and they converted it into an argument which, upon every hypothesis, they might, as they conceived, fairly urge. They insisted that it was an *abdication* of the crown, and that no expedient remained but to fill up the throne, which had thus become vacant.

Most fortunately, it happened that the gentry of England had their understandings less bewildered by the abstractions of divinity and law than the nobility and bishops. In the Commons, the Whig party were nearly two to one; however, after a very curious debate, they thought proper to produce only the following heterogeneous and



meconsistent vote : — “ That King James the Second, having endeavoured to subvert the constitution of the kingdom by breaking the original contract between king and people, and by the advice of Jesuits and other wicked persons having violated the fundamental laws, and having withdrawn himself out of this kingdom, has abdicated the government, and that the throne is thereby vacant.”

We will observe for a moment the words here used : “ That King James the Second, having endeavoured to subvert the constitution of the kingdom by breaking the original contract between king and people,” (so far we have the great interests of civil liberty and the Whig principles making their appearance,) “ and by the advice of Jesuits and other wicked persons having violated the fundamental laws,” (here we have the religious part of the contest,) — but in consequence of all this, — what ? that his Majesty had forfeited his right to the crown ? that the next in the Protestant succession should be called to the throne ? are these the words that follow, — as apparently they ought ? No ; the words that follow are these : “ and having withdrawn himself out of this kingdom,” (not voluntarily, as every one knew,) “ has abdicated the government,” (meaning, by the word “ abdicated,” to imply that he had done a legal act, that he had formally divested himself of the crown) ; and then, at last, came the necessary conclusion of the whole, “ and that the throne is thereby vacant.”

As the Whigs were, in the House of Commons, the stronger party, and, after asserting their principle of the original contract, had chosen not to push it to its logical conclusions, which would have been so offensive to the Tories, but to rest the vacancy of the throne on the departure of the king, the Tories of the lower house probably thought that no better terms were to be had ; and after a debate of four hours, the motion which the Tories made was only for an adjournment, and this was with some hurry and noise overruled, and the original vote, without a division, was carried, and sent up to the Lords.

Not only Burnet should now be consulted, but by all means the Journals of the Lords, or Cobbett's Parliamentary History, and Clarendon's Diary.

The vote no sooner reached the upper house than it was immediately separated into its component parts, and debated clause by clause.

From the Journals it appears that the House had already taken due pains to collect all their members ; some were sick, some out of the kingdom, some absent, probably by design.

But before the vote of the Commons was debated paragraph by paragraph, the first effort of the Tories was to slip aside, if possible, from these disagreeable positions of the original contract and violation of fundamental laws, and, without expressly saying whether the throne was or was not vacant, to obtain a vote for a regency. On

this occasion the Whigs overpowered their opponents, and maintained the fortunes of the Revolution, only by a majority of two voices, — fifty-one to forty-nine. The names of the members *present* are in the Journals; the *whole* number in a former page; the names of the minority are in Clarendon's Diary: so that every thing respecting these important votes, how each peer voted or conducted himself, may be ascertained. Lord Churchill, afterwards the great Duke of Marlborough, and a few others, chose to be indisposed; Sancroft, the archbishop, in like manner, to be absent. Of the fourteen bishops that attended, two only, Bristol and London, voted with the Whigs.

On the next sitting, the Lords debated, in the first place, the great Whig doctrine of the original contract between the king and people, and the affirmative (that there was such an original contract) was carried by a majority of seven, — fifty-three to forty-six. The Whigs, therefore, were gaining ground.

But here their triumphs ended: they could not get the word "abdicated" carried; nor, the next day, that the Prince and Princess of Orange should be declared king and queen, which was lost by five, forty-seven to fifty-two; nor, "that the throne was vacant," — lost by eleven (forty-four to fifty-five, — not forty-one to fifty-five, as it is in Lord Clarendon, probably by a mistake of the figure). The word "deserted" was substituted for the word "abdicated"; the clause about the vacancy of the throne omitted; and in this state the vote returned to the Commons.

But the Commons could not see the propriety of these alterations; a *conference*, therefore, took place.

The discussion which took place on this remarkable occasion is represented by some writers, and even by Hume, as turning (to use his own words) upon "frivolous topics," and as "more resembling the verbal disputes of the schools than the solid reasonings of statesmen and legislators." They who are at all acquainted with the very metaphysical nature of Mr. Hume's most favorite compositions will be somewhat surprised at this sudden impatience and dislike of those verbal disputes, as he terms them, or rather, as he ought to think them, of those explanations and distinctions of words and phrases, without which no subject of importance ever was or can be thoroughly examined.

This conference between the Lords and Commons, far from being cast aside, as the mere idle discussion of unmeaning subtilties, should, I conceive, be considered with the utmost attention. It is given by Cobbett. Some of the first men the country has produced were engaged in it; the occasion was the most important that has ever occurred; and the debate itself will be found in no respect unworthy of the character and abilities of the speakers.

The value of this conference appears to consist in this: that it is a development of those principles which must always, more or less,



exist in a mixed monarchical government, — of the principles, and of their consequences when applied to practice. And such a development is and must ever be of importance, not only to ourselves, but to all who are ever to live under any reasonably mixed form of government; because the laws and ordinances of any such form of government can never speak, any more than our own do, of resistance to authority, of dethroning kings, of trying, of punishing them, of the paramount authority of the public, and other political positions and maxims of the same kind. Such can never be the *language* of the constitution of a country: but if it be thence inferred, that no language but the ordinary language of the constitution is ever to be used, that no maxims but the ordinary maxims of the laws are ever to be proceeded upon, *then* these memorable debates, and above all, this memorable conference, will be of value, to show in what inextricable, what fatal, perplexity a nation and its statesmen must be left, if, when its liberties are invaded, they will not submit to acknowledge, that, however sacred the general rules of hereditary monarchy or civil obedience may be, exceptions must be sometimes admitted, and, whether admitted or not in theory, must at all events be sometimes proceeded upon in practice.

On the whole, it must be confessed that the Whig leaders conducted themselves through all these transactions with a temper which no political party ever before showed; they considered their opponents neither as necessarily knaves nor certainly fools, neither as combined to destroy their country nor as holding principles inconsistent with society, — compliments that were, no doubt, paid them out of doors very liberally; but no impatient expressions or accusations of the kind seem to have escaped them: while, on the contrary, the Tory lords were insulted repeatedly in their passage to the house; the public in London (for the Tories were probably predominant in the country) intimated to them very plainly, that they considered themselves as somewhat forgotten in their debates. The Whig leaders, however, contrived, by every possible forbearance and palliation, to render the acquiescence of the Tories in the new settlement of the government as little offensive to their particular principles, and therefore to their feelings of honor, as possible; a wisdom, this, very rare, and at all times very desirable.

Great bodies of men seldom understand very thoroughly those principles of religion and politics which they profess, or rather never understand the real value of the difference that exists between them and their opponents on these subjects; but they can always comprehend fully that it is dishonorable for them to desert, in time of trial, what they have been accustomed to profess, and therefore, right or wrong, *this* they will not *do*. Here lay the great merit of the Whigs, — their temper, their spirit of conciliation, their practical philosophy, their genuine wisdom, so different from the wisdom of those who, on

occasions of political or other weighty discussion, ignorant of the business of the world, and unfitted for it, bustle about with importance, displaying all the triumphs of their logic, and hurrying their opponents and themselves into difficulties and disgrace, from the very offensiveness of their manner, and from their vain and puerile confidence in what they think the cogency of reason and the evidence of truth.

And now comes forward the great merit of William himself. William had done every thing, from the first, which he understood to be consistent with the liberties and laws of the country; he then waited the event. But he perceived that the parties were far more nearly balanced than he had probably at first supposed; that, if either of these parties insisted on their own opinion, in defiance of the other, a civil war might ensue; that the Tories were, in practice at least, indifferent to the service he had rendered them, now that they were safe from Popery; that the Whigs themselves seemed to be thinking more anxiously of the maxims of the constitution of England than of what was due to the great cause of civil and religious liberty, not only in England, but in Europe; and that no one could be found who appeared sufficiently impressed with what was owing both to the States of Holland and to himself, for embarking in an enterprise originally so unpromising, always so perilous, and hitherto so successfully conducted.

That William had a perfect right to be considerably out of humor cannot be doubted; and if he had not expressed his own sentiments at a proper juncture, and given the weight of his decision to the arguments and expostulations of the Whigs, it is impossible to say how long and how preposterously the Tories might have persevered in their most impracticable opinions, and again, how long the moderation and caution of the Whigs might have been able to sustain itself, and might have continued to maintain the peace of the community, — in other words, whether a civil war might not have been the result, or at least the return of James. What passed on this occasion between William and the Whig leaders is well known. “They might have a regent,” he told them, “no doubt, if they thought proper, but he would not be that regent; they might wish him, perhaps, to reign in right, and during the lifetime, of his wife, but he would submit to nothing of the sort; and he should certainly, in either case, return to Holland, and leave them to settle their government in any manner they thought best.” The conclusion from all this was plain: that he and the Princess were to be raised to the throne; and that he chose, himself, to possess the crown, as if it had regularly descended to him, or not at all.

This conduct in William was at the time and has often since been branded by many reasoners and writers as not a little base and criminal: criminal, from the violation of duty to James, his father-in-law,



whom he was accused of having thus dethroned ; base, from the proof thus exhibited, that from the first he had been actuated merely by selfish ambition, — that, from the first, he had but dissembled his real designs on the crown, — that, from the first, every thing he had been doing was in direct contradiction to all he had professed and avowed in his own Declaration.

To consider this subject for a moment. — In his First Declaration he had said that his expedition was intended for no other design but to have a free and lawful Parliament assembled as soon as possible ; that “ he had nothing before his eyes in this undertaking but the preservation of the Protestant religion, the covering of all men from persecution for their consciences, and the securing to the whole nation the free enjoyment of their laws, rights, and liberties under a just and legal government ” ; and again, in his Additional Declaration, “ that no person could have such hard thoughts of him as to imagine that he had any other design in this undertaking than to procure a settlement of the religion and of the liberties and properties of the subjects upon so sure a foundation, that there might be no danger of the nation’s relapsing into the like miseries at any time hereafter ” ; that “ the forces he had brought along with him were utterly disproportioned to that wicked design of conquering the nation, if he were capable of intending it ” ; and that of those who countenanced the expedition, “ many were distinguished by their constant fidelity to the crown.” This last is the strongest expression to be found, — the only one where the crown is exactly mentioned.

To representations of this nature it may be briefly answered, that it is mere mockery to speak of William’s duty, as a son, to one who never was or wished to be his father-in-law in any sense of the word ; and that, whatever construction might be given, by the Tories or by the Whigs, to the terms of the Prince’s Declaration, it was quite idle to suppose that he and the States of Holland would embark in an enterprise like this, and put every interest that was dear to them into a situation of the most imminent danger, for the sake of the good people of England alone. What was England to either of them, but as a member of the great community of Europe, — as a country that might be Protestant or Popish, that might concur to protect or destroy them, merely as James did or did not succeed in his designs upon its liberties and constitution ? Their civil and religious interests and those of England thoroughly coincided, and the whole cause was the most generous and noble that could well be proposed to the human imagination ; but when it had succeeded, and succeeded so completely, — when, without disturbance or bloodshed, the whole force and energies of such a country as England were within the reach of William, to be turned to the defence of every interest of his own country, of Europe, and of England itself, — when this could be

done only by his requiring for himself the executive administration of the government, — when every other expedient could only have served to renew the designs and power of James and Louis, and must have ultimately ended in the ruin of the civil and religious liberties of mankind; in this situation of things, was it for William to disappoint the reasonable expectations of his own country, and of every intelligent man in Europe, — to be wanting to his own glory, and to show himself incapable of discharging the high office of humanity, to which, in the mysterious dispensation of events, he had been called? Was it for William to abandon all the great pretensions and honors of his life, embarked, as he had been from the first, in opposition to Louis, and placed on the theatre of Europe in a situation of all the most elevated, — that of the champion, and hitherto the successful champion, of the civil and religious liberties of mankind?

The fact is, that what was required or expected from William by the moralists and statesmen who criminated or even censured his conduct, then or afterwards, was in itself inconsistent and impossible. No man with the views or feelings of such moralists or statesmen would have ever engaged in such an enterprise at all, much less have conducted it with success. Enterprises like these, that produce an epoch in the annals of the world, and give a new career of advancement to society, are neither approached nor comprehended at the time, but by men of a more exalted order, like William. Even to such men, the latent possibilities of such enterprises, from the uncertain nature of every thing human, can be apprehended only dimly and at a distance, and suspected rather than seen; the prospect clears or darkens as they proceed; it opens at last, or shuts for ever; but if the moment of visible glory once presents itself, it is then that these heroes of the world march on as did William, and decide for themselves and for posterity the happiness of kingdoms and of ages.

In consequence of William's decided and critical interference, the Lords at last agreed to withdraw their amendments, to consent to the word "abdicated," and to admit the vacancy of the crown. Burnet seems to say that these important points were carried at last by a majority of only two or three voices.

When it was at last resolved to crown the Prince and Princess of Orange, a new oath of allegiance was to be constructed. This was done with very commendable attention to the Tories, that, while they concurred with the new settlement, their principles might be as little interfered with as possible.

And now began the benefits of this successful enterprise. First, the line of succession was departed from, and it was declared that no Papist should reign; Popery was therefore escaped. Secondly, William was made king, though it was his wife, not himself, who was next in succession, William, therefore, was considered as elected. The right, therefore, of the community, in particular cases, to inter-



fere with the disposal of the executive power, and even of the crown itself, was exercised and admitted. Thirdly, before the crown was conferred, as a preliminary part of the ceremony, the opportunity was taken, which had not been taken at the Restoration, of making some provision for the future security of the constitution, and certain rights and liberties were claimed, demanded, and insisted upon, as the undoubted rights and liberties of the people of England. The constitution was, therefore, renewed and confirmed. The Prince and Princess, when they received the crown, which was after this Declaration tendered to them, in their turn declared, that "they thank fully accepted what was offered them."

These remarkable transactions have been a fruitful source of political discussion; and as it is difficult, indeed impossible, to refer to the various inferences that have been drawn from them with respect to the constitution of England, I shall select, as prominent specimens, and of an opposite nature, the Discourse of Dr. Price on the Love of our Country, and the Reflections of Mr. Burke on the French Revolution; and it is to them chiefly that I shall allude, in the observations which I shall now offer.

From the general turn and result of these memorable proceedings, it appears to Dr. Price that the people of England have acquired a right (to use his own words) "to choose their own governors, to cashier them for misconduct, and to frame a government for themselves." All this is resisted by Mr. Burke; and, stated in the unqualified manner of Dr. Price, it cannot well be admitted.

Yet something more must be admitted than Mr. Burke seems willing to allow. As far as precedent can establish a right, it must be conceded, both from all the language of the parties at the time, and from the result of these transactions, that the right is established in the people of England, on very grave and urgent occasions, of departing from the hereditary succession, and therefore, as Dr. Price would have it, in such cases, of choosing a governor for themselves, for it was in this manner that King William was chosen.

But the same reasonings, and every other fact, conspire to show that this is a right, as Mr. Burke contended, to be exercised rather as of necessity than of choice; to be admitted as a mere exception to the general rule of hereditary succession, and as in no respect to be considered as the rule itself; a right to be exercised with the same unwillingness and doubt with which any great rule in morality would be broken, — broken from the mere necessity of the case.

In reasoning of this tenor and spirit, Mr. Burke seems perfectly supported by the whole of the expressions that appear on the face of these proceedings, and the facts that took place. Reference may even be had to the sum and substance of the whole, and it may be asked, What were the alterations which the patriots in 1688 really did make in the constitution? These will be found very much to

disappoint the expectations of all such reasoners as suppose that constitutions of government are in the first place to be planned out according to the suggestions of deliberative wisdom, and, when reduced to shape and order and perfection, *then* to be proposed and accepted by a people, and the people thus made to grow up and fashion themselves to their prescribed model.

There is certainly little in these transactions to countenance any experiments or reasonings of this nature. The same rights and liberties which had been claimed, demanded, and insisted upon, when the crown was tendered, were afterwards converted into the materials of an act, which was presented to the king and received the royal assent, and the whole was then "declared, enacted, and established by authority of this present Parliament, to stand, remain, and be the law of this realm for ever." This was done, and no more; this was all that, apparently at least, was attempted. No pretences were made to any merit of salutary alteration or legislative reform. The original Declaration, the subsequent Bill of Rights, were each of them expressly stated to be only a *declaration* of the old constitution; they were each an exhibition of the rights and liberties of the people of England, already undoubted and their own; experiment, innovation, every thing of this kind, is virtually disclaimed, for nothing of the kind is visible in the style or language of these singular records.

It must, however, on the other hand, be carefully noticed, that, though the Bill of Rights might not propose itself as any alteration, it was certainly a complete renovation, of the free constitution of England. The abject state to which the laws, the constitution, and the people themselves had fallen must never be forgotten; and it then can surely not be denied that this public assertion, on a sudden, this establishment and enactment, of all the great leading principles of a free government fairly deserves the appellation which it has always received, of the *Revolution* of 1688.

It is very material to observe, that the Declaration and enactment were totally on the popular side, were declaratory entirely and exclusively of the rights and liberties of the people, in no respect of the prerogatives of the crown. The Bill of Rights was, in fact, a new Magna Charta, — a new Petition of Right, — a new enrolment of the prerogatives, if I may so speak, of the democratic part of the constitution, — which, though consented to by William, an elected prince, and perhaps even thought necessary to his own justification and security, could only have been extorted by force from any reigning hereditary monarch, and, in point of fact, was certainly not procured by the English nation, on this occasion, till the regular possessor of the crown had ceased to wear it, and till the country had appeared in a state of positive and successful resistance to his authority.

It must always be remembered, that, through the whole of these



proceedings, there was an acknowledgment and a practical exhibition of the great popular doctrine, that all government, and all the forms and provisions which are necessary to its administration, must ultimately be referred to the happiness of the people. This is supposed at every moment, from the first resistance of the measures of James, to the last act of the ceremony of crowning the Prince of Orange; and it is this acknowledgment, and this practical exhibition of a great theoretical truth, which constitute the eternal value and importance of these most remarkable transactions. The caution, the moderation, the forbearance, the modest wisdom with which the leading actors in the scene conducted themselves are the proper subjects of our panegyric, but must never be so dwelt upon, that we are to forget the real meaning of these proceedings, their positive example, their permanent instruction, transmitted practically and visibly, not only to the sovereign, but to the people.

Hitherto we have considered the Revolution chiefly with respect to the civil constitution of the kingdom; but another subject, to which, before I conclude this lecture, I must briefly advert, still remains. The student must never forget that he is at all times to keep his attention fixed on the state and progress, not only of the *civil*, but of the *religious*, liberties of mankind. As the connection between them is so natural, it might fairly be supposed that the same advancement which the former seemed at this epoch to have received would have been received in like manner by the latter; but there is more difficulty in this latter case than there is even in the former, and the same sort of efforts for religious liberty that failed at the Restoration failed likewise at the Revolution.

But with respect to these efforts, the merit seems to have belonged almost exclusively to William. The great defender of the religious as well as civil liberties of his own country and of Europe, the great assertor of the Protestant cause in England and on the Continent, was not inconsistent with himself; there were no exertions which he did not make to introduce into the houses of legislature, and among the people of this country, those generous and reasonable notions which he did not find, and with which his own elevated nature, even in a religious age, was so honorably animated and impressed.

His first attempt appears to have been to emancipate the Dissenters from the Test Act. This was an act passed in the reign of Charles the Second, and originally levelled against the Papists, or rather against the Duke of York, — not against the Presbyterians. They had, indeed, been persuaded to concur in it, lest, at that very critical period, the bill should, by any hesitation of theirs, or even modification in their favor, be lost; and it was understood that they were subsequently to be released from its provisions. This, however, they never were, nor are they, even at this day; so easy in politics is it to be wrong, so difficult afterwards to become right. King Wil-

liam, for instance, found all his efforts entirely fruitless : the business was, indeed, agitated in the Lords, in the Commons, in the nation, — the protests in the Journals of the Lords are remarkable, as are all the proceedings related by Burnet, — but the bishop closes his account by saying, “ It was soon very visible that we were not in a temper cool or calm enough to encourage the further prosecuting such a design.”

You will see in the Note-book on the table a few more observations on this subject of the Test Act, to explain its history. It has always been represented as the palladium of our constitution in church and state ; this, I think, is the expression made use of in sermons, and addresses, and episcopal charges. I must take the liberty of considering it as a monument of national impolicy, and even national want of good faith and honor.

We now, therefore, turn to consider what this intelligent statesman, really and in point of fact, was able at last to accomplish for the cause of religious liberty in England, at that time the most enlightened country in Europe in all the principles of *civil* liberty. He obtained, then, the Toleration Act.

“ Forasmuch,” says the preamble to the act, “ as some ease to scrupulous consciences in the exercise of religion may be an effectual means to unite their Majesties’ Protestant subjects in interest and affection,” &c., &c. On this account the existing penalties were taken off from the body of Dissenters with respect to the exercise and profession of their faith, on condition of taking the oath of allegiance, an oath to which they had no objection. This act, therefore, with respect to the great body of the Dissenters, was really an Act of Toleration.

But you will observe, that, besides the body of the Dissenters, there are the teachers of the Dissenters to be considered. With respect to the teachers of the Dissenters, the Nonconforming ministers, the existing penalties of Lord Clarendon’s act were strong, — that they were not to come within five miles of corporate towns, &c., &c. These were by the Toleration Act taken off, but on a certain condition, — that these teachers signed those articles of the Church of England which related to faith. The toleration, therefore, and indulgence granted to the Dissenting teachers was this, — that they were excused from signing those articles which related to discipline. This act, therefore, as far as mere reasoning was concerned (but this, in the affairs of mankind, is only one point among many), — this act, I say, as far as mere reasoning and logic were concerned, bore upon the face of it its own condemnation ; for, if the Dissenting ministers differed from the Church in articles of faith, they could not yet sign, and the act extended to them no toleration ; and if they differed from the Church only in points of discipline, *then* those points of discipline and church government should not have been insisted



upon by the Church, and they should have been brought within her pale. But allowance must be made for mankind on subjects like these.

On the whole, the Toleration Act was an act of relief and indulgence; as such it has always been considered; it has been administered and interpreted very favorably to the Nonconformists, and very inconsistently with the mere letter of it, — that is, very creditably to the government, — from the increasing humanity and more consistent Christianity of the times.

The Toleration Act was an act with which, defective as it might really be, and must necessarily have appeared to William, still it was perfectly incumbent on him to rest contented, as society was at the time not in a temper to grant more. Probably the king thought so; for, having made these wise and virtuous efforts soon after his accession, and established the Kirk of Scotland, agreeably, as he conceived, to the wishes of the nation, he seems to have turned immediately, and without further expostulation, from this not altogether ineffectual campaign in the cause of religious liberty, to face his enemies in the field in defence of the more intelligible rights of civil liberty. These enemies he found in Ireland and in the continent of Europe, and he was happy enough to overpower the one, and at least to check and resist the other.

Since I drew up these lectures, the Stuart papers have been published, and the historical student will naturally refer to them, — the Life of James the Second, edited by Mr. Clarke. I have not found it necessary to make any alterations either in my first or in this second course of lectures, in consequence of the perusal of them. All the regular conclusions of historians and intelligent writers seem to me only confirmed, and rendered more than ever capable of illustration, by the new materials of observation that are now exhibited to our view.

The same might be said, I have no doubt, if the very journal of the king (James the Second) had been placed before us. This has unfortunately perished. We have in the Stuart papers only the representation of it, given by some friend or confidential agent of the family; but between this representation and the real and original composition of the king himself the great difference would be, that the king's own journal would have shown, in a manner more natural and striking, all the faults of his mind and disposition. Of these there can surely be no further evidence necessary; certainly not to those who understand and love liberty; but, after all, these are not the majority: and the loss of the journal, independent of the curiosity belonging to the other characters of these times, must be considered as a great loss, because, though no new light would have been thrown on these subjects, there would have been more; and there cannot be *too much* light thrown. They who run should read.

## LECTURE XXI.

## EAST AND WEST INDIES.

WE must now consider ourselves as having made a sort of progress through the more important parts of the history of modern Europe. We have alluded to the conquests and final settlements of the barbarous nations, the Dark Ages, the progress of society, the ages of inventions and discoveries, the revival of learning, the Reformation, the civil and religious wars, the fortunes of the French constitution and government; the fortunes, in like manner, of our own civil and religious liberties, till they were at length successfully asserted, confirmed, and established, at the Revolution of 1688. We have made our comments on that most fortunate event.

We might now, therefore, proceed to the character and reign of William, and to the history of more modern times; but I must first attend to a part of the modern history of Europe of which I have hitherto taken no notice; and I must go back for nearly two centuries, while I advert to a series of events which distinguished the ages of inventions and discoveries, and which are on every account deserving of our curiosity: I allude to the discovery of the New World, and the conquests and settlements of the different European nations in the East and West Indies.

This omission of mine you have, no doubt, remarked; but to these topics I have as yet forbore to make any reference, because, among other reasons, I wished not to interrupt the train of your reflections and inquiries, while directed to the subject of the progress of Europe, more particularly in its great interests of civil and religious liberty,—a subject which, if surveyed apart, has a sort of unity in it, which I have in this manner endeavoured to preserve. I must not, however, be supposed insensible to the curiosity and interest which belong to such events as distinguish the lives of the discoverers and conquerors of a new hemisphere, the great navigators and military captains of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. I have wished only to adjourn for a season, by no means to disregard, such memorable transactions.

While we read the civil and religious history of Europe in the manner I have supposed, the general facts respecting America and the Indies will present themselves, and may be received without any immediate examination; nor is this of any material consequence; we may still hasten on. We can easily conceive, what in fact took place, that these vast and unknown regions, when once discovered, would be converted into the great theatres where enterprise and courage were to be exhibited. We can find no difficulty in suppos-



ing, that the woods and morasses of America, however gloomy and inhospitable, would still seem a retreat and a refuge to those who were exasperated by persecution or inflamed by religious enthusiasm. We may easily take into our account the effect which would be produced on the minds of men by the novelty of their prospects and situation, on the discovery of a new portion of the globe. All this we may conceive, and in a general manner take for granted, while we read the history of Europe; and we may afterwards turn back and examine the more particular history of these expeditions, and give them such attention as, on the whole, and in comparison with other objects of reflection, they may appear to deserve.

But here again, as on all former occasions, we should transport ourselves in imagination back to this distant period, and assume, for a time, the opinions and sympathies of those who went before us, the better to understand their merits and to be instructed by their faults, the better to be animated by their history, and improved in our own minds and dispositions by the spectacle before us, — by the images of our common nature placed in scenes so fitted to display all the possible varieties of the human character. Science has now been advanced, navigation brought to comparative perfection; the winds and currents of other climates and seas, the shores and rocks, the rivers and the harbours, of an unknown hemisphere, have now been ascertained; and we travel over the ocean as we journey over the land, expecting at a given time to reach a given place, and with little more fear of miscarriage and disappointment in the one case than in the other. But the situation of mankind at the close of the fifteenth century in none of these respects resembled ours; the difference is one of the greatest testimonies that can be produced to the progressive nature of human improvement; and before we open the history of America, we must endeavour to forget, for a season, our present situation and our comparative advantages. After all our efforts, it will scarcely be possible for us properly to comprehend and sympathize with the various strong and contradictory emotions to which these enterprises gave occasion, in the course of their origin, progress, and success.

The work of Dr. Robertson is well known. The whole subject, as far as we need at present consider it, is there fully discussed. To his *History of America* I must refer you. In his work we are made acquainted, first, with the progress of navigation anterior to the time of the great Columbus, the discoverer of America; the nature and the fortunes of his enterprise; the fortunes of Columbus himself: the conquest of Mexico, by Cortés; of Peru, by Pizarro: and we have also a very full discussion of a subject so extraordinary as the situation and nature of whole races of men that before had never been supposed to exist.

Themes so striking and so interesting have not in vain been pre-

sented to this accomplished historian. He has formed a narrative and composed a work, of all others the most attractive that the range of history affords; and along with the other merits which his writings so generally exhibit, this production has another, not so obvious, and surely of very difficult attainment: he is never betrayed into inconsiderate enthusiasm by the splendid nature of his subject; his imagination does not improperly take fire, amid events and characters of a cast so dazzling and so romantic; he is still an historian, — he is still calm, deliberative, and precise. While delivering a story which an epic poet might have been proud to have invented, he never loses for a moment the confidence of his readers by any appearance of exaggeration, or any passion for dramatic representation. Content with the real interest of his theme, he proceeds with his usual dignified composure, and delivers to posterity those inestimable pages which may be at once an amusement for the most young and uninformed and a study for the most grave and enlightened.

Such, I confess, is the general impression which has been made on my own mind by the perusal of the work of Dr. Robertson, and I think it quite sufficient to refer my readers, for an account of America, to his History of America. This History is, unfortunately for the author, like his other compositions, put into our hands very early in the course of our education, and too soon, before its merits can be properly understood; and it is in general not read again at a maturer period, because it is supposed, very *unreasonably*, that it has been already read. This mistake I must entreat my hearers not to commit with any of his writings, or, indeed, any of the great classical works of our literature. The pages of Dr. Robertson have not the unwearied splendor of Gibbon, or the sudden flashes of sagacity which so charm us in the historical writings of Hume; but Robertson is always an historian, with all the important merits which belong to the character.

Mr. Southey, indeed, accuses him of leaning to a system, and of unwarrantably depreciating the character and civilization of the two great nations of America, — the Mexicans and Peruvians. I see not what temptation he could have for doing so; and if the student should turn to Clavigero, and Garcilasso de la Vega, to whose accounts Mr. Southey refers, — to Clavigero's strictures, and Dr. Robertson's replies to him, — I do not conceive that your confidence in our own historian will be at all disturbed.

Once more, therefore, referring to his History, as perfectly adequate to all the purposes of your entertainment and instruction, I am yet desirous that you should, at the same time, undertake the perusal of some of the original authorities. I will mention such as I think you may read.

The subject teems with striking events and characters, of which too much cannot well be known. Columbus, for instance, seems to



have been a man whose merit was above all praise ; whose character, if we consider the very extraordinary energy which it both possessed and exhibited, was yet so tempered and chastised as to be rendered faultless, to a degree of which there is in history no parallel : of such a man every original notice is invaluable. There is a Life of him by his son ; it is not long, is easily found, is continually referred to by Robertson ; and on these accounts I recommend it to your perusal. A translation of it is given in the second volume of Churchill's Voyages. A son of Columbus might, perhaps, have been expected to say more of such a father ; but there is a simplicity in what is said, and an attention to the paramount importance of precision and truth, that render every word of consequence. When men who have communications of real interest to deliver to the world are not regular writers, their narratives only gain a new interest from the very manner, imperfect and unadorned, in which they are conveyed. On these occasions we want only facts and observations, — the facts that occurred, and the observations to which they gave rise at the moment. In original works, the finer the manufacture, the more suspicious is the article.

In the five chapters between the fourth and the tenth, of the Life of Columbus, may be traced the manner in which this extraordinary man at last persuaded himself that the *East* Indies might be found by sailing *westward*.

It is surely curious to observe the wavering and unexpected streams of light that penetrated through the great mass of darkness that lay before the contemplation of Columbus, — the strange mixture of ancient authority and of modern report, of fable and fact, of truth and falsehood, out of which this enthusiastic, yet reasonable, projector was to create, as well as he could, conclusions convincing to himself, and, if possible, satisfactory to others. But it is not only curious, but useful ; that we may learn to understand the workings of the human mind in extraordinary situations, surrounded by conjectures and possibilities, fair deductions and mistaken inferences, and wandering, as it were, alone and unprotected, over the doubtful confines of the reason and the imagination. In this manner we may be taught the respect that is always due to the suggestions and plans, however wild and imperfect they may at first appear, of schemers and projectors of every description, — men often of original and powerful minds, who must be listened to with patience, and soothed and assisted by our calmer reflections, not ridiculed or repelled by indifference and scorn. Every encouragement ought always to be afforded to creative genius ; and amid a world where every thing may be obtained by enterprise, and nothing without it, no chance should be lost for the accommodation of our nature and the progress of human prosperity.

Reflections like these are but confirmed by the chapters which succeed in the work now alluded to. The king of Portugal “gave ear,”

says the biographer, "to the admiral's proposals"; but at last "resolved to send a caravel *privately* to attempt that which the admiral had proposed to him"; and the navigators employed, says the recital, "after wandering many days upon the sea, turned back to the islands of Cabo Verde, laughing at the undertaking, and saying it was impossible there should be any land in those seas."

In this manner were to be treated the elevated views and generous nature of Columbus. When no further hope, therefore, remained for him in Portugal, and when his plans were, in consequence, submitted to the Spanish court, the observations of those judges who were appointed to decide upon a man like this, a man whom they were totally unworthy to estimate, appear to have been these; I will give them to you, because they are specimens of human reasoning on all such new occasions, and therefore instructive:—"That since, in so many thousand years as had passed since the creation, so many skilful sailors had got no knowledge of such countries, it was not likely that the admiral should know more than all that were then, or had been before." Others said, "The world was so prodigious great, that it was incredible three years' sail would bring him to the end of the east"; and Seneca, it seems, was quoted against him. Others argued, "That, if any man should sail straight away westward, as the admiral proposed, he would not be able to return into Spain, because of the roundness of the globe." The argument that follows, and which I will mention, may appear at first ludicrous, but it should rather serve to show you, as may the others, the manner in which a cause is prejudged by ignorance and indolence. "They looked upon it," they said, "as most certain, that whosoever should go out of the hemisphere known to Ptolemy would go down, and then it would be impossible to return; affirming it would be like climbing a hill, which ships could not do with the stiffest gale."

"The admiral," as we are told by his biographer, "sufficiently solved all these objections"; but it was in vain that he solved them,—it was in vain that this Hercules, in the infancy of his fame, strangled the serpents that hissed around his cradle. He retired,—he was obliged to retire. Five years were to be wasted in these fruitless endeavours to satisfy and inform these arbiters of his fate; and he was then to be dismissed with a civil rejection of his proposals.

Yet some there were, as it appears, who were not insensible to the merit of this great man; and he himself remained collected and unmoved, confident of success, and not to be beaten down by ignorance or insult. The assistance of Queen Isabella was procured for him, however slowly, by his protectors; and he became, at length, the great Columbus of history, who unveiled to us the surface of our planet, and showed a new world to the civilized portion of mankind. There is here, surely, much of encouragement to be found for the patrons of genius; much of animating instruction for genius



itself; much of admonition to the presumptuous stupidity of inferior minds.

The same interest, and the same moral, belong to the succeeding chapters. These describe the voyage of this fearless navigator over an ocean pathless and unknown, where every new occurrence was to his sailors an object of terror, and a reason for an instant abandonment of the enterprise. If the weeds appeared, it was that rocks were concealed; if they thickened, that their progress must soon become impossible; if the winds were steady and favorable, it was to preclude them from all hopes of return; if the magnetic needle varied, it was that nature was no longer nature; and to please whom, his companions asked themselves, and for what purpose, were these intolerable terrors to be endured? It is clear from the narrative, that nothing but the extraordinary merit of Columbus saved him from destruction; and that no human powers of sagacity, fortitude, and skill could have longer preserved him from the very natural despair of his sailors, when land at last appeared.

Great military captains and conquerors have often been able to govern the minds of those around them, in situations of the most trying difficulty and danger. But they are themselves animated by fierce and impetuous passions; so are their followers. Both leaders and followers, on these occasions, have at least land on which they can tread, and they have their swords in their hands. It may, at least, be known where and how they are to perish; and they are in perils and alarms which others have experienced before them.

But Columbus was a man of benevolent temper and peaceful mind; with no resentments to exasperate his feelings, no lust of empire to inflame his reason; animated only with the pure and innocent enthusiasm of a projector, with the commendable love of true glory, and with sentiments of piety to his Creator. His associates were to be controlled in the midst of an ocean which no beings but themselves had ever presumed to enter. There was nothing near them but the sea and the clouds; nothing above, below, or around them, but uncertainty, danger, or death. They were exiled from all existence: enterprise seemed no longer to have any meaning, courage any object. There was nothing on which they could fix their eyes, and no enemy whom they could attempt to subdue, but, standing before them, Columbus himself, single and unprotected; a man of like nature with themselves, and the cause of all their sufferings.

The merit of Columbus does not yet cease. The land had been discovered, his projects successful; and he was then, on his return, to be overtaken by a tempest which threatened every moment to bury at once and for ever himself, his companions, and his fame. In this last and most overpowering calamity of all, he writes, and commits to the chance of the waves, the letter addressed to his sovereigns,—the letter so justly celebrated,—the monument of that presence of

mind, that piety, and that fortitude, which the visible approach of death, not only to himself, but his fame, could not disturb, and no situation of disappointment or affliction could apparently destroy.

Pursuing his history, it is evident that an ordinary man would have been soon overpowered by the rebellions and mutinies which he had to encounter; and even the mind of Columbus himself must be considered as fortunate in the use he made of the natural phenomenon of an eclipse to extricate himself from his dangers in the island of Jamaica.

And as if nothing were to be wanting to recommend this extraordinary man to the regard of posterity, to the tenderness as well as admiration of future ages, he was destined to lead a life continually checkered with difficulties and defeats, disappointments and injuries, — marked with the most brilliant success, but marked also by misfortunes of the most overpowering nature, and outrages not to be endured; to have inscribed, indeed, upon his tomb, by the command of his sovereign, that he had given Spain a new world, — but to have buried with him, in the same tomb, the fetters in which he had been sent home as a public offender and a convicted criminal.

What I have now said will give you a glimpse (a most imperfect one) of the first memorable enterprise, the subsequent fortunes, and the extraordinary merits of Columbus. It was written many years ago, and I have now, in 1828, had my attention called to the *Life of Columbus* by Mr. Washington Irving. By the accession of his volumes, we have now the biography of Columbus; as by Robertson's work we before had, and still have, the history. Mr. Irving's has been to me a very interesting production, sometimes marked with passages of great force and beauty; and it contains every thing respecting Columbus that can be wanted. He has had valuable sources of information, which he describes, and which were not within the reach of Robertson. Still, his volumes only show, as usual, the merits of Robertson. Upon looking over the historian's account once more, I see no mistakes, and no material omissions; in a concise and calm manner every particular of importance is intimated to the reader; and Mr. Irving has only told in the detail (but in a very interesting and agreeable manner, and I recommend his volumes to you) what our excellent historian had told before.

Having thus alluded to the first and great hero of the general subject, I must proceed to other parts of it. I come next to the conquest of Mexico.

We have here, also, original authorities, which may be procured and read.

In the first place, it must be observed, that the great repository of all original documents respecting the New World is the Italian collection of Ramusio, the work quoted by Robertson. Here will be found translated the Letters of Cortés to his sovereign; memorials that so



particularly deserve our consideration. The First Letter seems lost, but it is sufficiently clear that it was not of any great consequence. The Second is of the greatest importance. There was a Latin translation made of two of these Letters (the Second and Third; there are in all four) so early as in 1524, in *the time* of Cortés, but the book is now very rare. It has lately been bought for our public library.

Another original authority we have in the work of Bernal Diaz del Castillo, a faithful follower and fellow-soldier of Cortés; a translation of which has been made by Mr. Keatinge, and was published in London in 1800.

And lastly, as a comment upon the whole, we have the work of Clavigero, which has been translated.

The History of Herrera, to which Robertson so constantly refers, is to be found, in the original Spanish, in some of our libraries; and some of the decades, particularly those which relate to Mexico, have been translated into French. There is an English translation of the work of Herrera by Stevens, in six volumes, octavo, published in 1725.

I would recommend the Second Letter, at least, of Cortés to be perused. It is, unfortunately, too much after the manner of a state paper, and transactions are related in that general, official style which precludes those details, that enumeration of minute circumstances, those passing discoveries of personal feelings, which, when a distinguished man is giving his own history to his friend or even to the world, often render his account a study for all subsequent ages. Still, the Letters of Cortés are an authentic, though summary, relation of his proceedings from the planting of the colony at Vera Cruz to the conquest of the Mexican empire and the discovery of the South Sea. And when we know the facts from him and from other sources, it must always be a subject of some entertainment and curiosity to observe how such a man could represent such facts to his court.

In reading the achievements of Cortés, as in reading the life of Columbus, it is to be wished that the mind should forget, if possible, its knowledge of the events; for by this temporary oblivion alone can we feel all the interest of the story, and perceive the full merit of these Spanish conquerors. This merit is not merely that of other conquerors, — the courage and skill which can attack and overpower the enemies that appear before them; in addition to this merit, they have one (unless, perhaps, the enterprise of Alexander against India be thought of the same nature) exclusively their own, — that of marching forward into an immense country, totally ignorant of what they were to expect, by what enemies they were to be attacked, by what dangers assailed. They were landed on the edge of a continent, and then to proceed among nations of whom they knew nothing, over a tract of country which they had to discover, uncertain of their

provisions, or of any proper sources of intelligence. It is quite an event, for instance, in this history, that by a fortunate accident they acquired the means of understanding the Mexican language. If they were worsted, how were they to retreat? But even if they conquered, what were they afterwards to do? Were they to remain in the capital of an unknown empire, — supposing they could get possession of it, — five hundred men, in that insulated situation, to keep millions of men in subjection?

This appears to me the more appropriate merit of Cortés and his followers, and the extraordinary interest of this history. At every moment, the reader may stop and ask himself, What must be the *next* result? What measure is Cortés *next* to adopt? What will the Indians *now* attempt? This sort of sensation of uncertainty, of indistinct and strange expectation, which so belongs to this history, is not conveyed to a reader by the formal narrative of Cortés himself, but it is to a certain degree by Bernal Diaz; and it would be *entirely* so, if he had not mixed and confused the parts of his story. The consequence of this want of proper distinctness and arrangement is, that the reader is not properly conducted from step to step, gradually and slowly, seeing nothing before him, nothing but the ground on which he stands, and therefore as uncertain as the Spaniards must themselves have been of what was next to follow. This want of arrangement in Bernal Diaz is unfortunate. The defect, however, is properly supplied by Robertson, whose relation, as it ought to do, gradually awakens, and then duly gratifies, expectation and anxiety.

But to return to the Letters of Cortés, and to give a specimen or two of their contents.

And, first, it may be curious to observe the sentiments by which these plunderers and destroyers of innocent nations conceived themselves to be actuated. After having made a certain progress in the country, the soldiers, when they saw the numbers and the courage of their new enemies, murmured aloud, that it was folly to proceed, that retreat would soon be impossible, and that they would leave Cortés to go alone, if he persisted in his impracticable enterprise.

“I told them to be of good courage,” says Cortés, in his Second Letter; “to remember that they were the subjects of your Majesty; that Spaniards had never been wanting in proper spirit; that we were so happily situated, that ours would be the fortune to acquire for your Majesty greater kingdoms and dominions than the whole world could elsewhere furnish; that we ought to behave ourselves like good men, and like Christians who were to be rewarded by supreme felicity in the life to come, — by greater honor and renown in this than any other generation had ever acquired; and that they were to consider the assistance which was afforded us by that Almighty with whom nothing was impossible, and who evidenced his favor to our cause by the victories which he vouchsafed to us, — so fatal to the enemy, so bloodless to ourselves.”



Such were the motives which Cortés produced to his sovereigns. He omits another, which he certainly produced to his soldiers, — the prospect of gold and plunder; no doubt, the never-ceasing and strongly exciting cause of all that astonishing perseverance which the Spaniards, already brave, exhibited in the discovery and conquests of the New World.

Again, Cortés, as he proceeded in his enterprise, clearly perceived, that, though he had a powerful monarch and an immense empire to oppose in Montezuma and Mexico, still that he should find allies as he went along, and that, therefore, success was at least not impossible. "It was with the greatest pleasure," says he, "that I saw their dissensions and animosities, for a way was thus opened me for their subjection. 'From the mountain proceeds,' according to the proverb, 'what burns the mountain'; and 'The kingdom,' says the Gospel, 'that is divided against itself, cannot stand.'"

One of the most daring achievements of the military skill and policy of Cortés was the seizure of Montezuma in his palace at mid-day. He takes no pains to varnish over this transaction to his court; to such a court (that of the Emperor Charles the Fifth) it would have been unnecessary. "I thought," says Cortés, "that it would be of material consequence, and conduce to the advancement of your Majesty's state, and very much to our protection and security, if the aforesaid Lord Montezuma was placed within my power." He mentions the pretences he made use of; but he hurries over, with all possible brevity, the distress and expostulations of the unfortunate emperor. "There was a long altercation between us," says he, "on these points; and it would be tedious to enumerate what passed on each side." From a word that escapes Cortés, and from a single word only, may be conjectured the effect that was produced on the nobles by this extraordinary outrage on the majesty of their sovereign: — "In the deepest silence and with tears they placed him on his litter": "*Flentes lecticæ imposuerunt.*"

Cortés says nothing of the real intrepidity and hardiness of this transaction; and Cæsar himself relates not his exploits with a more distant neutrality than through the whole of these Letters does the conqueror of Mexico. But Bernal Diaz del Castillo, who is more disposed to do himself justice, cannot help observing, — "Now let the curious consider upon our heroic actions; first, in destroying our ships, and therewith all hope of retreat; secondly, in entering the city of Mexico after the alarming warnings that we had received; thirdly, in daring to make prisoner the great Montezuma, king of all that country, in his own capital, and in the centre of his own palace, surrounded by his numerous guards; and, fourthly, in publicly burning his officers in front of his palace, and putting the king in irons during the execution. Now that I am old, I frequently revolve and reflect upon the events of that day, which appear to me as fresh as

if they had just passed, — such is the impression they have made upon my mind. I say that it was not we who did these things, but that all was guided by the hand of God; for what men on earth would otherwise have ventured, their numbers not amounting to four hundred and fifty, to have seized and put in irons a mighty monarch, and publicly burned his officers for obeying his orders, in a city larger than Venice, and at a distance of a thousand and five hundred leagues from their native country? There is much matter for reflection in this, and it merits to be detailed otherwise than in the dry manner in which I relate it.” — Bernal Diaz, page 158.

The horrible outrage to which Bernal Diaz here alludes certainly took place. Montezuma was obliged to deliver up to Cortés the officers who by his own order had fallen upon a party of the Spaniards and had put some of them to death. Cortés ordered these unfortunate subjects and defenders of an invaded monarch to be burnt alive, he saw the sentence executed, and he even threw Montezuma himself into chains. Even these transactions he relates in no apologetical manner; he seems to think it sufficient that Montezuma's officers had killed the Spaniards, — no further crime was necessary in them; and that Montezuma had ordered them to do so, — this was an offence sufficient in *him*. “*Et hoc modo,*” these were his words, “*fuerunt publicè in plateâ sinè aliquo tumultu aut seditione combusti.*” Again: “*Eodem die quo combusti fuêre, Montezuma in compedes collocari jussi.*”

The last scene of degradation for Montezuma yet remained; he was publicly to acknowledge himself the vassal of the king of Spain. Here Cortés does not disguise, for it enhanced his own merit with the court, the mortification and pangs of an outraged monarch and his insulted people. He gives the speech of Montezuma; it was, no doubt, dictated to him by Cortés. Its purport was to show that the master of Cortés was the true descendant of the original head of the Mexican race, to whom they owed allegiance. “Such were the words,” says Cortés, “which he delivered, with tears and sighs more and more deep than any tongue can adequately tell.” The nobles participated in the anguish of their sovereign; and even the Spaniards themselves, the unfeeling arbiters of his fate, could not escape from the contagion of the general sympathy. Nothing, it is probable, but such passions as avarice and ambition could have kept them firm to their purpose.

In this Second Letter of Cortés may also be found a description of the city of Mexico. The facts he states are many and curious. The single fact of his seeing more than sixty thousand people every day meeting in a place for the purposes of buying and selling is quite sufficient to indicate the general civilization and importance of any community. “*Est in eâdem civitate platea ubi quotidie ultra sexaginta millia hominum vendentium ementiumque cernuntur.*”



The Third Letter contains the account of the protracted siege and final conquest of the city of Mexico. The bravery of Guatemozin, the virtuous Hector of his Troy, is noted by Cortés; but there is no account of the subsequent transactions which relate to this unfortunate prince, and which have consigned the principal followers of Cortés, and even Cortés himself, to the eternal reprobation of mankind.

The work of Bernal Diaz has been described by Robertson, and must by the recommendation of such an author as Robertson be sufficiently introduced to your curiosity. I know of no portion of this original work that can be well omitted, as the whole is not long, and as it is not an historian writing, but an old soldier talking to us, deeply impressed, and very naturally impressed, with his own merits and those of his companions, and with the extraordinary scenes in which he had been engaged. It is not easy to turn away from a recital which, however rambling and often confused, bears always its own internal evidence of fairness and truth. "Let the wise and learned," says this honest veteran, "read my History from beginning to end, and they will then confess that there never existed in the world men who by bold achievement have gained more for their lord and king than we, the brave conquerors, amongst the most valiant of whom I was considered as one, and am the most ancient of all. I say again, that I, — I myself, — I am a true conqueror, and the most ancient of all." — Bernal Diaz, page 501.

The narrative of Bernal Diaz is always more minute and artless, and therefore very often of greater value, than even the Letters of Cortés; and there is scarcely a point which can attract our curiosity that is not in some part or other touched upon.

In the two quartos of the work of Clavigero, the last three chapters of the first volume, the fifth, sixth, and seventh, are worth reading, and may be compared with Robertson. His preface should be looked at, and the list of authors and original authorities. Most of the second volume is also worth reading; and it is very agreeable, and in some respects instructive, to compare together Bernal Diaz, Clavigero, and Robertson. Clavigero is too minute, and Robertson, perhaps, not enough so.

For the next division of the general subject, the conquest of Peru, I cannot but consider the account of Robertson as sufficient. Pizarro was, after all, a vulgar conqueror, and is from the first detested, though he seizes upon our respect, and retains it in defiance of ourselves, from the powerful and decisive nature of his courage and of his understanding. The Peruvians, too, excite in us no emotions but those of the most genuine compassion. They repel not our imagination, as do the Mexicans, by the abominable rites of their superstition; but neither, on the other hand, do they occupy our respect by any proper defence of their country.

When the facts of the discovery and conquest of the New World

have been thus investigated, the original subject of interest should then again present itself to your consideration. In this new world we have races of men who were never before suspected to be in existence. Are they, then, like ourselves? If different, in what respect different? Are there any new principles in human nature to be here discovered, or is there only to be seen a confirmation of the old? What materials are here supplied for the consideration of the statesman, the moralist, the metaphysician? It is with this sort of speculating spirit that the history of the New World and of its inhabitants should be considered anew, after the curiosity which belongs to the *mere narrative* has been once satisfied.

Robertson, in his references and in his own very calm and intelligent observations, opens a wide field for meditation to a contemplative mind, and has neither declined nor treated unworthily this important part of his general subject. But no observation upon it can be expected from me, when it has not only been discussed by such a writer, but is in itself too extensive for a lecture.

On the whole, the distinction which Dr. Robertson has made between the inhabitants of Mexico and Peru and all the *other* more rude nations of America will be found to contribute materially to a clear view of the whole subject. With respect to these latter (the more savage nations), I would recommend, in addition to the pages of Robertson, the notes in Murphy's translation of Tacitus, "*De Moribus Germaniæ.*" These will afford you a general idea of the uniform effect of natural and moral causes upon human beings, by the comparison which is there exhibited between the characters and manners of our savage ancestors in the woods of Germany and of the savages in the woods of America.

But with respect both to these more savage nations and also to the Mexicans and the Peruvians, I may remark, on the whole, that in this new world, as in our own, it is still the same human nature which appears before us. The metaphysician will find the human being still furnished with ideas exactly in proportion to his sources of sensation and reflection, and the same pervading influence of the principle of association. The moralist will see, in like manner, the same original feeling of selfishness, modified more or less by the social feeling; the same hopes and fears, pleasures and pains, affections and passions. The naturalist will perceive the same influence of climate; and the statesman, of political institution. There are, no doubt, some very remarkable varieties in the Peruvian character, not only of a physical, but of an intellectual nature, — more, indeed, than Robertson can entirely explain; but our knowledge of the political situation of the Peruvians, at the time of the Conquest, is very imperfect, and our knowledge of the effect and operation of climate not adequate to the discussion of the subject.

It may be added, with a reference to Robertson's account, that the



difficulty is not how the Mexican superstition became ferocious and terrible, but how the Peruvian could ever have been mild and innocent; and he gives a description of the state of property in the Peruvian nation which is scarcely to be understood, — not at all, but upon the supposition, that the Peruvians, with respect to waste land, were still in the situation of the inhabitants of a new country.

On the whole, it may be observed, that, after we have entered upon the history of this new world, and for some time accompanied the march of Cortés, we perceive that it is our own fellow-mortals with whom we are still concerned, and that we might in many respects conceive ourselves to be still reading the history of Europe. We find a large tract of country divided into different states; we see different forms of government, republics and monarchies, a sort of feudal system, an aristocracy, different ranks and professions, wars and insurrections, conquests and rebellions, and the inhabitants of the New World not distinguishable in their principles of political action from the nations we are already acquainted with in the Old.

The first impression, too, of wonder, with which we hear of the conquest of a whole continent by a handful of Spaniards, abates as we proceed. Cortés conquered the great empire of Mexico as much by his Indian allies as by his European followers. That empire, it appears, had spread its conquests far and wide, and had everywhere become an object of hatred or terror by its ambition and harsh government. The fall of Mexico is only one instance in the New World, to be added to all those in the Old, of the impolicy of such harsh government and of such unprincipled ambition.

When the Spaniards appeared, the superiority of their arms and discipline made them be considered, and indeed actually rendered them, for all purposes of war, superior beings. In the battles of Homer, the only difference between the celestial and terrestrial combatants is, that the former cannot be killed. The same was the difference between the Europeans and their opponents. For instance, the Indians had such a superiority of numbers in one of the engagements, that Bernal Diaz declares, "They could have buried us under the dust they could have held in their hands." But it appears, from the account of the same eyewitness, that, when the field was afterwards walked over and examined, there were upwards of eight hundred Indians lying dead or dying of their wounds, and only two Europeans, one by a wound in the ear, and the other by one in the throat. The wonder is rather that the Mexicans defended their empire so well, when we consider the nature of the Spanish soldiery, and the unfortunate description of the character of Montezuma.

Pizarro, in like manner, had every necessary advantage over the Peruvians: a disputed succession, a civil war raging in the country, allies wherever he moved, and a people so inferior in the military art, that these new invaders were here also considered, and very naturally considered, as more than human.

One topic, among many others, connected with the discovery and conquest of the New World, is that of the cruelties which were exercised by the Spaniards upon the defenceless Indians. These cruelties, while they have left an eternal stain on the Spanish name, have consigned to immortality the virtuous labors of Las Casas, the celebrated bishop of Chiapa. His efforts in the cause of suffering humanity make a short, but interesting, portion of the History of Robertson. The bishop's own book will, I think, disappoint expectation. It is somewhat too declamatory and sweeping in its statements. This mode of writing and of statement, however, rather presupposes than invalidates the general truth of the account. It is natural for a man to write thus, who is full of his subject, and of the heinousness and extent of the crimes he is reprobating. Such a man feels calmness and detail and minuteness impossible, and a sort of insult on his feelings.

The empires of Mexico and Peru, their situation and conquest, are the great, and indeed the only, subjects in the history of the Spanish achievements that deserve our study. But there are other subjects connected with the East and West Indies that must be attended to, and on which I must, before I conclude, refer you to some sources of information.

While the Spaniards were stretching away to the west, the Portuguese, who had been for some time creeping down the coast of Africa, at length doubled the Cape, finding in Vasco de Gama and Albuquerque the Columbus and the Cortés of the Eastern Indies. On this subject, information will be found in a few pages of the fifty-seventh Letter of Russell; and a more elaborate account (though not more than should be read), in the first three sections of the eighth volume of the Modern History. Dr. Robertson's last work on India should be read, as a very complete introduction to the whole.

As the Spaniards went round the world in one direction, and the Portuguese in another, they at length met; and their concerns and conquests became extremely entangled. On this subject there is a great deal more than can well be considered in the eighth volume of the Modern History. There is an account of the Brazils in Harris's Voyages. The Brazils had been seized upon by the Portuguese. When Portugal fell under the dominion of the Spanish crown, the Dutch made their appearance everywhere as the invaders of the possessions of their enemies. Of their conquests, settlements, and discoveries a sufficient account is given in the thirty-third chapter of the Modern History. A very tedious detail is also given of the history of the English East India Company; and all these subjects are shortly despatched in the eleventh Letter of Russell.\* All these works refer to more elaborate accounts, which may be consulted, if necessary.

\* History of Modern Europe, Part ii., Letter 11. — N.



But the more interesting part of the *English* achievements in these new worlds was their attempt to establish settlements in *North America*. Of this very curious subject a very adequate idea may be formed from the beginning of a great work which Dr. Robertson did not live to finish, and which has been since very properly published by his son. The references will conduct you to the original and more circumstantial histories of others. The first half of the first volume of the *Life of Washington*, lately published by Mr. Marshall, will be sufficient to supply what Dr. Robertson did not attempt to give.

The work of Raynal treats of every thing that can be sought for connected with these subjects. But as the author comprehended in his plan so extensive a field of inquiry, it was not possible that he should not be often inaccurate; and as he does not cite his authorities (an unpardonable omission), he suffers the fate of Voltaire, and is seldom quoted but to be reprehended. If, however, the student will pursue through the work all the great leading historical events, without troubling himself with the Abbé's exclamations and superfluous eloquence, and without depending on the minuter parts of his relation, there can be no doubt that these celebrated volumes, thus perused, will be found not only agreeable, but highly useful.

And now I must allude, in a few words, to a celebrated and somewhat singular work, of which the title is, "*An Account of the European Settlements in America*." I would recommend the perusal of this work before the details I have proposed have been begun, and again after they have been gone through; that is, I would recommend the perusal of it twice. It may be a map of the subject in the first instance, and a summary in the second.

This work has been always understood to be the work of Mr. Burke. Indeed, it could be attributed to no man of the period in which it was published, though a sort of Augustan age in England, but him. From the ease of the narrative, and the beauty of its observations, it might have belonged to Goldsmith. But there is a greater acquaintance with the commerce and politics of the European nations than could well be supposed, even in an author whose pen could touch upon every thing, and upon every thing with success. Add to this, that the rapid and fine philosophy, the careless spirit, and all that affluence of mind which so uniformly distinguished the works of Burke, are all as clearly discernible, in many parts of this anonymous and unpolished production, as in any of the most regular performances of that extraordinary man. As the work proceeds, the subjects diminish in real interest; and the delight, though not always the instruction, of the reader, diminishes also. It has been said, and with much appearance of probability, that these volumes were written by Burke in conjunction with his brother, who had lived in the West Indies, and who must have had much local and valuable information to communi-

cate ; that the heavier parts were consigned by the orator to his more humble associate ; and that, after treating, himself, the more interesting topics in the earlier part of the work, he did no more than revise and retouch the remainder.

The great misfortune of the work is, that subjects which deserved all the powers of Burke are often despatched in too summary a manner ; the great defect, that the author announces not his own sources of information, and leaves his readers without a wish to inquire after any other works but Harris's *Collection of Voyages and Lafitau*, — valuable works, no doubt, but Mr. Burke might have assisted an inquirer with his observations on all the writers and documents which he had consulted, and such observations would have been inferior in value only to the work itself.

During the period which we are now considering, the commerce of the world, and its knowledge, were rapidly progressive. There are those who have a pleasure in tracing out the steps which lead to permanent alterations and improvements in the concerns of mankind. To minds of this speculative and superior cast the early collections of voyages may be recommended, — Hakluyt and Purchas. Works like these are very curious monuments of the nature of human enterprises, human testimony and credulity, — of the nature of the human mind and of human affairs. Much more is, indeed, offered to a refined and philosophic observer, though buried amid this unwieldy and unsightly mass, than was ever supposed by its original readers, or even its first compilers.

In addition to the sort of interest which belongs to these ancient accounts of the first efforts of discoverers and settlers, in the latter volumes of Purchas will be found very valuable abridgments of the original accounts relative to the achievements of the Spaniards in South America, particularly a curious exhibition of the Mexican painting ; and a very sufficient, though too favorable, idea may be here formed of Las Casas's book, of which the greatest part is given. These collections of voyages were followed by the collections of Churchill and Harris. But you must note, that, when Harris's work is quoted, it is the last edition, not the first, that is referred to.

Before I conclude, I must observe that this most extensive subject of the conquests and settlements of the European nations in the East and West Indies divides itself into two great departments of inquiry : — First, What were the conquests made, and what was their history ? Secondly, What were the consequences of these discoveries and conquests ? With respect to the first part of the subject, I have already endeavoured to introduce my hearers to such works as I conceive will be adequate to their information. The second part of the subject (the consequences) belongs to the remaining portion of modern history. The discovery of these new tracts of country, these new sources of affluence and strength, as they were everywhere consid-



ered, necessarily affected, and has never ceased to affect, the politics of the nations of Europe. A new object of observation is thus opened to the philosophic reader of history; and this is to be added to those which have before occupied his attention.

Modern history thus appears to me to present two great fields of investigation, — the progress of the human mind, and the progress of human prosperity: the progress of the human mind, as seen in the advancement of literature and science, and as seen in the different modes which the European nations have adopted for administering the blessings of government and religion; to be traced, it must be confessed, through the wars and the disputes, foreign and domestic, which such most serious, most interesting subjects could not fail to occasion: the progress of human prosperity, as seen in the growth, multiplication, and extension of the accommodations of life; to be traced, it must also be confessed, through systems of unenlightened legislation, through monopolies and restrictions, and, what is still more to be lamented, through atrocious enterprises of cruelty and conquest. To the former of these subjects, to the fortunes of the civil and religious liberties of mankind, we have hitherto more particularly adverted; for they form the most important and critical portion of the first part of modern history. But the latter, the subject of the internal trade, manufactures, commercial greatness, and rivalry of the different states of Europe must hereafter share also our attention. When united, they constitute the great interest and instruction of the more modern history of Europe and of the world.

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## LECTURE XXII.

1811.

WILLIAM THE THIRD.

THE great subject of all history is the civil and religious liberties of mankind, for on these depend their intelligence, their prosperity, their happiness, private and public; and hence arises the extraordinary interest which belongs to the era of our Revolution. In consequence of that most fortunate event, these liberties were in England asserted with a success unexampled in the history of the nations of the earth; and we must now, therefore, proceed to consider, as we

have already in part done, how far they were at that period, of 1688, adjusted and established, and what was their subsequent progress.

The first object of our attention is the reign of William the Third; then follows that of Queen Anne: both very critical. This will appear very evident to those who examine them with any care, more particularly to those who have the faculty of placing themselves in the scenes that they see described by the historian, — a faculty of great consequence to those who are to read history.

In the present lecture, I shall first mention the books that must be either consulted or read. I shall then make some observations on the parties by which these and subsequent periods have been distinguished. I shall then allude to some of the constitutional questions which occurred in the reign of William, such as were *then* of importance, and such as I conceive will be *ever* of importance to the inhabitants of this country, while their free and mixed form of government remains.

And now, when we enter upon the reign of William, we have no longer the assistance of the philosophic Hume. We have no longer within our reach those penetrating observations, those careless and inimitable beauties, which were so justly the delight of Gibbon, and which, with whatever prejudices they may be accompanied, and however suspicious may be those representations which they sometimes enforce and adorn, still render the loss of his pages a subject of the greatest regret, and leave a void which it is impossible adequately to supply.

In the absence of Hume, the Histories of Dr. Somerville will be found very useful; nor are they as yet sufficiently known or duly estimated.

Belsham will, I think, in like manner be found, for a considerable part of his work, very valuable, — spirited, intelligent, an ardent friend to civil and religious liberty, and though apparently a Dissenter, not a sectarian. In his latter volumes, indeed, from the breaking out of the late French war in 1793, he has departed from the equanimity of an historian, and has degenerated into the warmth, and almost the rage, of a party writer.

Of these authors (Somerville and Belsham) the use to the student will be the same. They will show him those more important subjects of reflection which the detail of the history contains; they will offer to him observations generally very judicious, and always the results of much more labor and investigation than he will himself be disposed to undertake. These more important subjects may, whenever occasion requires, be followed up in their references; and some of them may be investigated in this more complete manner on account of their own general importance, and as a portion of the proper labor of a philosophic reader of history.

For the *detail*, Tindal will be found not unworthy to be the succes-



zor of Rapin; equally diligent and copious, with the same attachment to the best interests of Englishmen, and, like his predecessor, a sort of general substitute, in the absence of other writers.

But the great historian for detail, even more than Tindal, is Ralph. Such subjects as may be thought, from the representations of Belsham and Somerville, to be important, may be read with much advantage in this author; ill-humored, no doubt, but laborious and impartial. Indeed, the whole work should be looked over, though it cannot, and for general purposes it need not, be regularly read.

Burnet must, of course, be diligently perused, as an eyewitness and actor in the scene. His merits and defects seem to remain, in this part of his History, what they were from the first. He is often blamed, but his reports and representations are seldom without their reasonableness or their foundation, and must always be at least taken into account. Of late the credit of Burnet, even for accuracy, has been rising; and since I drew up this lecture, a new edition of the work has been very properly published at Oxford, in which, for the first time, are given the abusive notes of Swift, the unfriendly comments of Lord Dartmouth, and the very excellent and constitutional observations of Speaker Onslow.

Cobbett will supply the debates. In the appendix to the fifth volume, there are several tracts published, which will give an idea of the views of reasoners and statesmen at the time, and there is not one of them that will not be found, in some way or other, valuable; more particularly, Lord Shaftesbury's tract, No. 1, containing his objections to the representation of the House of Commons, and a scheme for its reform; Lord Somers's, No. 4, — his explanation and vindication of the merits of the Revolution and the subsequent system; Mr. Hampden's, No. 6, — a general description of the state of public opinion at the time, and of the constitution, and against an excise; Mr. Lawton's, No. 9, is a sort of specimen of the discontents of the Whigs; in No. 13 will be found all the arguments in favor of the liberty of the press; No. 15 is worth reading; and particularly Nos. 17 and 18, the Kentish petition, &c.

The leading views that I should propose to the student, of the reign of William, are these: — Supposing himself, as usual, to be acquainted with all subsequent events, he is to consider, as the great object before him, first, the liberties of England, — secondly, the liberties of the Continent: that is, in other words, first, whether the Revolution of 1688 was destined to succeed, — whether the exiled family was to be restored; secondly, whether the ambition of Louis, whether the aggrandizement of France, was to be checked. These seem the questions to which all others may be considered as subordinate, and within which they may, for the most part, be included.

And first with respect to England. To all reasoners at the time, the ultimate success of the Revolution must have appeared very

doubtful. The student cannot have reflected upon the history of this Revolution in 1688, without observing the fortunate manner in which it was accomplished; that the success of it was owing, not only to the great prudence and merit of William, but to the great mistakes and faults of James, and above all, to the zeal of the latter for the Roman Catholic religion. The Church party, and the Tory party, comprehending so large a portion of the nation, always looked upon the crown as really belonging to the Stuart family. France was, in the mean time, considered not only as pledged to the cause of James, but as a power not easily to be resisted. Charles the Second, it could not but be remembered, though long a wanderer on the Continent, had been at last most triumphantly restored. Any good fortune or good management in James, the want of them in William, the death of either, a thousand contingencies, such as often take place in the affairs of the world, might obviously be sufficient to reinstate the Stuarts in their hereditary right. They had been driven away by a movement forced and unnatural to the English nation; their return was therefore, on the whole, very probable; and while this probability continued, the cause of the Revolution must all along be considered as still at issue.

The very doubtful nature of the success of the Revolution will appear, not only from a consideration of the state of opinions in England, and the general instability of every thing that relates to the politics of kingdoms, but from a due reflection on the intrigues that were carrying on, and it was but too natural to expect would continue to be carried on, between the exiled family and many individuals of great power and consequence in England, Scotland, and Ireland. We might have inferred the fact from the general principles of human conduct; but we are furnished with direct evidence to this effect in the state papers of Macpherson, which must therefore be examined.

The journal of James himself, which Macpherson gives, belongs to our present subject, from March, 1689; it is not long, and should be perused. We have here particulars relating to the siege of Londonderry; to the battle of the Boyne; the advances made to James by Churchill, afterwards the celebrated Duke of Marlborough; by Godolphin; a letter of duty and repentance by the Princess of Denmark, afterwards Queen Anne; communications with Russell and Shrewsbury; and various documents and reports relative to the invasion of England, and the state of public opinion in different periods of the reign of William. Among other letters the student will be surprised, and surely concerned, to find one from Churchill, in 1694, which betrays the expedition then intended against Brest, the expedition which terminated (though not in consequence of Churchill's letter) in a manner so calamitous to the English forces and their high-spirited commander. These papers may reasonably give rise to a



variety of reflections; and I would wish to refer my hearers very particularly to the fifteenth chapter of Dr. Somerville, where they will find the subject of the intrigues with the exiled family well discussed; and, on the whole, they will, I conceive, acquiesce in the general estimate formed by the historian. It is this: — “That, during the whole reign of William, his person and government were exposed to extreme danger; that, from his coronation, till his title was acknowledged by the French king, at the peace of Ryswick, a correspondence was constantly carried on between James and many persons of the first rank and influence in England; that individuals of every party, and even some of those who had been the most zealous agents in the Revolution, were accessory to that correspondence; that many conspiracies were formed, and very considerable preparations made for restoring the authority of James; and that even the most base and atrocious designs were set on foot to put an end to the power and life of William.”

But there were some circumstances that operated most happily to assist and support the establishment of the new government. For instance, it was difficult, under the vigilant administration of William, possessed of the military force of the kingdom, to erect the standard of revolt without the protection of a French army. It was difficult, in the mean time, for Louis to see a sufficient chance of success, unless some insurrection first encouraged his interference. It was not easy for the parties to combine their measures and views. The personal character of James was ill fitted to recommend his cause. The character of William, on the contrary, was marked by great qualities which were worthy of the confidence of brave and intelligent men. The friends of James were even divided in their political sentiments; some who were friends to him meant (so endless are the mistakes of men on political subjects) to be friends (can it be believed?) to the constitution, and by no means to establish arbitrary power. William was often absent from England, and the regency of Queen Mary was, on these occasions, conducted with a prudence and moderation that gained friends among every party in the nation, — not to mention that she was the eldest daughter of the exiled monarch, — and her rule was, therefore, more agreeable to the prejudices of the Tories. Her death only united the interests of William and the Princess Anne, and set the exiled family at a greater distance, by intercepting their more immediate return, and giving an opportunity of securing the descent of the crown in a line of Protestant successors. Lastly, as the constitution improved, all orders in the state became more and more alienated from the maxims of arbitrary prerogative, and were more and more disposed to a settlement which gave them a greater share and interest in the constitution of their country.

On the whole, the Revolution in 1688, while William lived, ap-

peared to succeed ; and on his death-bed, he had the gratification of reflecting, not only that he had maintained this great cause during his reign, but that he saw, through his exertions, the crown descend to Anne on the principles of the Revolution, and provision made for its subsequent transmission to the Protestant line, in exclusion of the exiled family.

The next question, therefore, is, To whom are we indebted for the happy issue of so doubtful an experiment during this most critical period of the reign of William ?

On inquiry, it will, I think, be found that the greatest share of the merit must be allotted to William himself ; but much will still remain to the great Whig leaders, and to their friends and adherents in the Parliament and the nation ; very little to the Church and Tory party, who acquiesced in the new order of things, and nothing more, and who negatively, rather than positively, contributed to its establishment. It was, on the whole, very fortunate for these kingdoms that the growing prosperity of the community had multiplied a description of men in the great cities and commercial and manufacturing towns, who were active, independent, and intelligent ; who were, therefore, favorable to the Whigs, and could be successfully opposed to the landed proprietors, — persons of great natural consequence and power, who in general had inherited, with their estates, opinions and feelings unfavorable to the civil and religious interests of mankind, derived from their too literal interpretation of particular texts in the Epistles. But these conclusions can be drawn only from a consideration of the conduct of all concerned, — that is, from the history of the reign. To that history I therefore refer you.

With this inquiry will be found connected another, by no means unworthy of consideration, — the conduct of William with respect to the two great parties then in the state, the Whigs and the Tories.

Every thing which a speculator on human nature could have anticipated with regard to the situation of the Prince of Orange, when he became king, was abundantly realized. William endeavoured to balance between the two parties, — to retain the affections of the Whigs, and yet acquire those of the Tories, — to give his favor to the one, but not to exclude the other from his kindness. The propriety and wisdom of his conduct, under all the existing circumstances, can, of course, be estimated only by a consideration of the history of his reign in all its detail, and must, after all, be not a little decided by the general confidence of the reader in his sagacity and good sense.

But, on the whole, he failed, and the failure of such a man is an example to show the difficulty of mediating between two parties, and the impossibility of receiving the proper benefit of the talents and virtues of both. No monarch ever possessed more knowledge of human nature, more equanimity, more elevation of mind, than William ; yet he found it impracticable to harmonize to the purposes of his government men animated by principles and interests so discordant.



But the king, though failing in the manner and to the degree I have noticed, was successful in the main. He so triumphed over the difficulties of his situation, violent passions on the one side, and unfortunate opinions on the other, that he at least supported the cause of the Revolution; and though his own personal comforts and composure of mind were continually disturbed, and sometimes destroyed, the civil and religious liberties of a great people and of the Continent were, with whatever sacrifices, embarrassments, and dangers to himself, asserted and maintained. This is a merit which will always place him high in the scale of estimation, even when compared with the greatest of his fellow-mortals.

On the whole, the first Parliament in King William's reign was the Convention Parliament, which legalized the Revolution, and enacted the Bill of Rights. But this was the work of the Whigs; and if they had done nothing more, they might, by these merits, have compensated for any subsequent faults, any faults but that of undoing their great work, and bringing the Stuarts back to the throne. This last crime, however, to the liberties of their country they neither did commit nor endeavoured to commit. It is painful, it is disgusting, it is astonishing, to find individuals among them corresponding with the exiled monarch, as if they were disposed to propitiate him, at least, and be considered as his friends rather than as his enemies, if fortune, by any of her unworthy caprices, placed him once more upon the throne. Of this baseness there were too many of them guilty, — guilty as individuals; but as a body, and as a party, they were never guilty. They were faithful to England and the best interests of mankind; and they never failed to show a lively sense of the great cause which was at issue, whenever the personal safety of William was in danger, or his throne was seen, as it sometimes was seen, really to shake under him. This is their paramount merit to all succeeding generations: they were the authors, the conductors, and the maintainers of the Revolution.

The reign of Elizabeth is recommended by Hume to the particular study of those who would wish to understand the nature of the English constitution; so may, I think, the period before us. By the Revolution and the Bill of Rights, no doubt, the liberties of the country received a most important advancement. But the constitution was settling, not settled; and questions of great consequence to its interests were agitated during the whole of this reign of William. We have the Civil List, the Place Bill, the Triennial Bill, the Treason Bill, the question of the liberty of the press, the question of standing armies, of the responsibility of ministers; and finally, we have the veto of the king more than once exercised, and even a sort of debate in the Commons upon this assertion of the prerogative. We have all these questions making their appearance in the course of a single reign of thirteen years. They comprehend most of the points which

belong to the formation of a good government, and it is to these questions, the debates upon them, the conduct of the two parties and of the king, that I would more particularly wish to call your attention.

But when I recommend it to you to pursue these subjects through the debates of the Houses, and in some instances through the statute-book, I am obliged to confess that the debates themselves will on these occasions much disappoint your expectations. They have been taken down so imperfectly, that each of the speeches given seems to resemble the hints or heads of a speech put down by a speaker before its delivery, rather than the report of a speech already delivered. Many of the parts are unconnected with each other; the sentences, as they stand, often unintelligible; and passages in the speech of one member replying to passages in the speech of another which do not appear. All this was a necessary consequence of what was at that time considered as a privilege of the House, one which the House ought always to insist upon, — the privacy of their debates. Their privilege it is still, and ought always to be; but it is now, very properly, insisted upon only occasionally, under some particular circumstances that seem to the House to require it. Instances of the assertion of this privilege occurred during this reign, in 1694; one Dyer, a news-letter writer, having presumed in his news-letter to take notice of the proceedings of the House, he was summoned to the House, reprimanded, &c.; and on the Journals appears the following order: — “That no news-letter writers do, in their letters or other papers that they disperse, presume to intermeddle with the debates or any other proceedings of this House.”

No stronger proof need be given of the advanced state, not only of society, but of the political situation of the country, than the decided improvement that has gradually taken place in this important particular. An estimate can now be formed, not only of the topics insisted upon by the speakers in either House, but generally of the relative beauty and eloquence of the speeches themselves. The judgment that may now be made, the criticism that may now be exercised, not only on the integrity, but on the ability, of the members of the two Houses, cannot but be of the most salutary consequence to them as well as to the public. Posterity will be able to derive an entertainment and instruction from the Parliamentary debates, which is to us, during a long period of our annals, not at all, or but too imperfectly, supplied. It is in vain for us to inquire after the Parliamentary eloquence of Hampden or Lord Bolingbroke; but after ages will not be entirely without the means of appreciating the powers of the two great orators of our own days, — of Mr. Fox and Mr. Pitt, the Demosthenes and the Cicero of modern history.

But to return. In examining such questions as I have stated to occur in the reign of William, recourse must be had, for want of better materials, to the debates, which may be found in Cobbett; and



if reference be had to his authorities, they will be found properly represented ; and concise, broken, and unsatisfactory as they may be, they may still convey much valuable instruction ; and from different paragraphs scattered over the speeches of a debate, a general notion may always be formed of the tone and temper of the period before us, and of the progress of the constitution of the country. Blackstone also, and the statute-book, must occasionally be referred to. The statute-book, it must always be remembered, is itself a history ; to a philosophic eye none so instructive. To convert it, however, into a history requires leisure, and capacity, and knowledge, and very patient habits of reflection and study.

The subject of the civil list is embarrassed by what was then the mixed nature of the revenue of the crown. There is some account of this revenue in Blackstone. But the best notice of it, as far as relates to William's reign, is to be seen in Burnet ; and as the passages in his History are characteristic of the times and of the opinions of former statesmen, I recommend them to your perusal.

It appears that the revenue was first given for a year, then for five years, then for life. At last, in the April of 1689, the revenue was properly distinguished into different parts, and it was resolved that six hundred thousand pounds should be allowed for the charge of the civil government, and seven hundred thousand pounds " towards the occasions and charge of the navy."

To us, no doubt, it must appear that the distinction between the personal expenses of the sovereign and those that belong to the state, which were formerly confounded, is not only perfectly just, but somewhat obvious ; that it was not only desirable, but necessary, that the crown should be furnished with a regular revenue of its own, either by inheritance or by the positive settlement of Parliament, and not be left to come continually to the House for pecuniary support, like a dependent on a benefactor. But the sentiments which our ancestors had imbibed, not only from the analogies and general spirit of the constitution, but from the dreadful lessons of former events, are sufficiently plain from their speeches and resolves on all these occasions, and, as such, highly worthy of remark.

A Place Bill was brought in ; by this bill all members of the House of Commons were incapacitated from holding places of trust and profit ; it was brought in by the Whigs, but at a time when they were in opposition. It was rejected by the Lords, but only by a very trifling majority, and not till after a very celebrated, though not very valuable or comprehensive, speech in favor of it by Lord Mulgrave, which you will see in Cobbett. When the Whigs were in power, it must be observed that the bill was again brought forward, was carried through the Houses, and lost only by the positive and very reasonable rejection of the king. The Commons were angry, and addressed his Majesty. They received a civil, though evasive reply, and they

then proceeded to comment very freely upon this reply; but the power of the veto was not denied; and when the motion for a further and more explicit answer from the king was made, it was very properly overruled by a majority of two hundred and twenty-nine to eighty-eight. The whole proceedings are very curious.

It must be remembered that *this* Place Bill went to incapacitate *all* members of the House from holding posts and places of trust and profit. The bill was modified in this respect afterwards, when it was brought forward in Queen Anne's reign. It is a very different question, whether *all*, or whether *some*, are to be incapacitated.

The third subject which I mentioned was the Triennial Bill. This bill was in like manner brought forward by the Whigs in the House of Lords. It was passed by the Commons, two hundred and ten to one hundred and thirty-two on the first reading, and only two hundred to one hundred and sixty-one on the second. The speakers in favor of it seem to have been the Whigs, and the arguments in support of it were all drawn from their school of political reasoning. This bill was also rejected by the king. Two years afterwards, however, the bill was once more carried through the two Houses, and at last received the royal assent. This bill, in the ancient Parliamentary manner of truck and barter, was coupled with a bill of supply; and the consideration of this supply, united to the expectation of the queen's death, probably procured from the king that assent which he had before so positively denied.

This statute is not, as has been represented, an infringement of any right or custom of annual Parliaments. No such right or custom ever existed since the known appearance of the House of Commons; it was, on the contrary, a limitation of the length of Parliaments, which had been accustomed to sit till the crown thought proper to dissolve them and call a new one; in Charles the Second's time, one and the same Parliament sat nearly eighteen years. The statute of William was to limit the continuance of any one Parliament to three years; it was a most distinct infringement of the power of the crown, which in this point, as it then stood, was inordinate; it was felt as an infringement, and so resisted, even by William the Third.

We owe this bill, and this happy alteration of the constitution in this particular respect, to the Whigs, which should be remembered by those who undertake to censure them for their Septennial Bill in the reign of George the First.

The Treason Bill was revived and carried. By this bill it was enacted, that the accused should have a copy of his indictment, counsel to plead for him, not be indicted except on the oaths of two witnesses, and within three years of the offence; that a list of the jury should be furnished, and a power to summon witnesses allowed. That provisions like these, so natural and so indispensable to the cause of justice, should be still wanting in the year 1695, and in a



country like England, where of all other countries the principles of civil liberty had been most uniformly and successfully vindicated, — that enactments like these should still even in this kingdom be wanting, — surely forms a very striking proof of the difficulty with which all efforts in the cause of political right can be successfully made. I need, surely, say nothing of the merit of those men who engage in such attempts, or of the good fortune of the country where such advantages are obtained.

The reign of William is also remarkable for the sentiments and conduct of our ancestors on the subject of a standing army. Their jealousy was such, that the king was denied not only the continuance of his defence against Louis the Fourteenth, but even his Dutch guards, the companions of his victories and the followers of his doubtful fortunes; an intolerable outrage, he could not but think, on his feelings of natural and honorable attachment. This subject is well treated by Somerville, and in pamphlets and speeches that may be found in Cobbett. In our own times, with our large masses of manufacturing population, such jealousy is in vain.

The liberty of the press is likewise one of the subjects belonging to this remarkable period. I will dwell a little on the subject, on account of its importance.

The first measure which a country naturally adopts is, to take the regulation of the press into its own hands, or rather, to leave the executive magistrate to do so. It was, therefore, with us, at first regulated by the king's proclamations, prohibitions, charters of privilege and license, and finally by the decrees of the Star-Chamber. A licenser is among the first expedients resorted to by a government, and beyond this stage in France the state seems never to have advanced.

So slow is the progress of mankind on such subjects, that even the Long Parliament, while it demolished the Star-Chamber, assumed the very powers which the Star-Chamber had exercised with respect to the licensing of books; and, as if the constitution was in this point to be benefited by *no* variety of change, a licenser was still the expedient *after* the Restoration. This appears from the act made in the year 1662, when the subject fell again under the consideration of the legislature, or rather of Clarendon. The act itself should be perused. It is in the eighth volume of the Statutes. A licenser, I must repeat, was still the expedient.

The language of the preamble is the natural language of mankind on these occasions; it is this: — "That by the general licentiousness of the late times many evil-disposed persons have been encouraged to print and sell heretical, schismatical, blasphemous, seditious, and treasonable books, &c., &c., for prevention whereof no surer means can be advised than by reducing and limiting the number of printing-presses," &c.

And what, then, is to follow? First, "That no person or persons

whatsoever shall presume to print, or cause to be printed, within this realm of England, &c., any heretical, seditious, schismatical, or offensive books or pamphlets, wherein any doctrine or opinion shall be asserted or maintained, which is contrary to the Christian faith, or the doctrine or discipline of the Church of England, or which shall or may tend, or be, to the scandal of religion or the Church, or the government or governors of the Church, state, or commonwealth, or of any corporation or particular person or persons whatsoever, nor shall import, publish, sell, or disperse any such book or books," &c., &c. These are very general and comprehensive terms.

What, then, were the printers or authors to do? As the terms were so general and comprehensive, how were they to be secure from offending? Why, by the next clause, all books concerning the common laws of this realm were to be printed by the special allowance of the Lord Chancellor, the Lords Chief Justices, &c., or one of their appointment; all books of history and affairs of state, &c., by the license of the Secretaries of State, &c.; books of divinity, physic, philosophy, &c., by the license of the Archbishop of Canterbury.\*

The penalties of the act were, that the printer, for the first offence, should be disabled from exercising his trade for the space of three years, and for the second, be disabled *for ever*; with further punishment of fine, imprisonment, or other corporal punishment, not extending to life or limb, at the pleasure of the judges.

Now here we have the first movement that is made by a state on this momentous subject. It wishes for knowledge, for inquiry, for literary exertion, for government, and for religion; but for no knowledge and no inquiry inconsistent with the interests of either that government or religion which is actually established at the time. It therefore denounces every thing that is in its opinion heretical and seditious, and produces its licensers. And this I conceive to be the first stage of legislation on the subject.

The next stage is, to lay aside the expedient of a licenser, to have no previous restraint on publications, but to give a general description of such books or writings as are illegal, and then to punish the authors or printers of any publications that come under such general description.

This is the second stage, and one of great improvement, — that to

\* The act designates four classes of books, with their respective licensers: — 1st, books concerning the Common Laws of the realm, to be licensed by the Lord Chancellor or Lord Keeper of the Great Seal, the Lords Chief Justices and Lord Chief Baron, or by their appointments; 2d, books of History, or concerning any Affairs of State, to be licensed by the Principal Secretaries of State, &c.; 3d, books of Heraldry, to be licensed by the Earl Marshal, &c.; 4th, all other books, whether of Divinity, Physic, Philosophy, or whatsoever other science or art, to be licensed by the Archbishop of Canterbury and the Bishop of London, &c., or by either one of the Chancellors or Vice-Chancellors of either of the Universities. — N.



which you will see Blackstone allude, and in which he seems to rest content. But much remains to be discussed and determined. For instance, What really are the general terms which the state makes use of? For, if general terms are to be used, there is no work, where the slightest freedom of thought is exercised, that may not be brought within their meaning. Here there is a great difficulty; and yet how is this difficulty to be avoided? What terms but *general* terms can be adopted? No other, certainly; it is therefore of very great importance what the general terms are; and this reflection will immediately lead to another inquiry, — *Who* are to decide whether the publication in question fairly comes within the general description of the law or not? The judges of the land, it will be answered, on the first view of the subject; for such men can alone know what is the exact meaning of the general terms made use of, from their long familiarity with the phraseology of the laws; and they must, from their situation, necessarily possess minds more enlightened, and understandings more powerful, than can be expected to fall to the lot of ordinary jurymen.

And thus we arrive at the completion of the second stage of legislation on the subject; no longer a licenser, as in the first, but a law made in general terms, and the judges of the land left to decide whether an author has offended against the law or not. This is a situation of things much more favorable to the interests of mankind.

But at length men will reason thus:—What is it that the laws mean? Only to prevent and punish such writings as are injurious to morals and religion, or dangerous to the state? They mean nothing more; they *ought* to mean nothing more. If, therefore, the writings are such that twelve ordinary men can see neither injury to morals and religion, nor danger to the state, in any reasonings or expressions which they contain, what can, in fact, be the injury or the danger? The province, therefore, of deciding upon such cases, it will be argued, ought to be withdrawn from the judges, who are not, on the whole, sufficiently unprejudiced and disinterested, and should be transferred to twelve ordinary men, to whom no such objection, and certainly no very reasonable objection, can be made.

Here we seem to have the third and last stage to which this most important subject can be brought; a law in general terms, and a jury to decide whether the law has been broken.

One point still remains, — the penalty. When the *nature* of the penalty has been previously described by the law in general terms, — imprisonment and fine, for instance, — the *degree* of it must be left to the discretion either of the jury or of the judges; to which, then, of the two? With whatever hesitation, we must intrust it to the latter, — the judges; that is, to those who are accustomed to the *use* of power, to the exercise of their judgments on different cases, and who decide, happily for their country, in the face of the bar and

of that country. To men like these rather than to successive bodies of men like jurymen, who would each act upon views of their own; whose punishments would, therefore, be capricious, and not to be calculated upon beforehand; and who, being liable to be affected, still more than judges, by the passions of the hour, would make their decisions sometimes improperly lenient, and at other times preposterously severe.

Here I must leave the subject, but I must leave it with addressing three observations to those who wish to make it, what it highly deserves to be, a subject of their meditation.

The first is this, — that the law must unavoidably make use of some general terms to describe what it prohibits. The difficulty, then, is, to determine what those general terms shall be, — what words and phrases will best allow to society all the means of information, and yet secure to it the peaceable enjoyment of some of its most important interests. The difficulty is very great; and it will be found more and more great, the more it is considered; at the same time that it is the very point which must be labored, whenever any improvement in any existing system is thought of.

My next observation is, that, as the jury is to decide whether the law has been violated, it is of great consequence how that jury is composed; who is the officer that selects them; in what manner, &c. Discretion must be lodged somewhere, no doubt; but here is another point in itself difficult, and that should be well considered.

My last observation is, that we have been obliged to leave the *degree* of penalty to depend on the good pleasure of the judges, and that therefore the subject of the liberty of the press cannot be considered as one that can ever be dismissed from public anxiety; because, though judges are men who go through the duties of their situation with more uniform accuracy, integrity, and intelligence than perhaps any other description of public functionaries that can be mentioned, still it must be observed that they are not likely to be of themselves very favorable to the liberty of the press. They are men accustomed to observe the benefits, not of criticizing the laws and government of a country, but of administering them; — peace, order, precedent, usage, these are the objects that naturally excite their respect; the necessity of control, of punishment, of reverence for established laws and institutions, these are the considerations that are alone familiar to their minds. The habits of their lives, the learning they possess, lead to no other trains of thinking or sympathy; and they are not likely to be very indulgent critics of popular feelings or even popular rights. Whatever be their personal integrity or professional ability, they are clearly distinguishable from the philosopher or patriot, who may be speculating both on them and the laws they administer and the government they serve, and the extent and ultimate wisdom of whose opinions they are never very willing to examine and understand.



They are not, therefore, very eligible dispensers of the penalties of the law, if any less objectionable could be found; but none can, and here, therefore, is a difficulty not entirely to be overcome, — the unfavorable temperament of the judges. But the temperament of the judges will sympathize with the temperament of the surrounding society, the bar in whose presence they act, the houses of legislature, and every intelligent man in the kingdom.

Discretion must always be lodged somewhere, but the manner in which it is exercised will always depend on the habits of thought and feeling known at the time to exist in the community; so little can a constitution provide for its own administration and security.

The liberty of the press is, therefore, a very faithful index of the state of the public mind and of the public happiness; for the press is more or less restrained, — it can never be left without some restraint, from the very nature of some particular subjects, — but it is more or less restrained, as a country enjoys more or less a pure religion, and a reasonable government, a wide circulation of knowledge, and a general diffusion of commercial and manufacturing prosperity.

To conclude my enumeration of important subjects, the student must not omit to consider the proceedings in the case of the impeachment of Lord Somers. I mention them for the sake of one conclusion that may, at least, be drawn from them, — the responsibility of ministers for every thing they do; that they are not to shelter themselves under any plea of deference to the opinions of their sovereign; that they are not to advise or to act in any manner inconsistent with their own views of propriety and policy, when the case before them is of sufficient importance.

From a consideration of the debates and transactions of this period, the constitution appears to be in the act of assuming its last and more regular form. Its different parts must be looked upon as at that time falling, rather than as having already fallen, into their appointed places. Thus, we have in the cabinet administrations made up of men differing from each other in their principles; in the Houses, the members of a party often opposing the measures of their friends in office; the king giving his veto to bills that had passed the Houses, from his inability to resist them in any other manner; the decisions of the Commons, and even of the Lords, very uncertain; their debates stormy. Occurrences like these indicate a constitution settling, rather than settled. But the whole is, on this account, only the more interesting and instructive.

The civil liberties of the country must, upon a review of the questions and the proceedings to which I have now briefly alluded, be considered as in a state of rapid progress: and this it was natural to expect would be the case, when the king was seated on the throne on the popular principles of resistance to illegal rule; when the patrons of arbitrary power were thrown into opposition, and therefore often

compelled to adopt language and measures favorable to civil freedom ; when the Whigs, who were now become the courtiers of the realm, could not but be influenced by their old habits of thinking and feeling on constitutional questions ; and when the nation itself could adopt no sentiments favorable to arbitrary power without being immediately reminded of James the Second, his judges and his priests, of Popery, and all the evils they had so narrowly escaped.

With regard to the religious liberties of the country, progress had likewise been made by the passing of the Act of Toleration.

The king's efforts in this great cause I have already noticed, — his somewhat unsuccessful efforts. No brighter part of his character can be found. Of the Whigs, the best panegyric, as far as relates to this subject, may be seen in the accusations of their political opponents, the Tories, who always called them Dissenters, and represented them as indifferent to the real interests of religion. This, however, was not their fault. They were guilty of no indifference to religion, but of a base fear of such accusations, and of a disgraceful compliance with the intolerant measures proposed to them, — proposed to them by those who were not unfrequently, on these occasions, their rivals for popularity, that doubtful criterion of public merit on many subjects, but above all on religious subjects ; for on religious subjects popularity can always be acquired by stigmatizing with terms of reproach, or pursuing with penalties or restrictions, any opposers of the established system.

When, therefore, we mention the Toleration Act which William procured, we must not forget the penal acts that were *also* passed. The Papists, the Arians, the Socinians, fell more particularly under the persecutions of the legislature. These descriptions of men saw themselves proclaimed in different penal statutes, — the one, the Papists, enemies of the state, who were not to exercise the offices of their religion, nor educate their children as they thought best, nor receive the inheritances of their fathers ; and the other, the Arians and Socinians, publishers of “many blasphemous and impious opinions,” (I use the words of the act,) “contrary to the doctrines and principles of the Christian religion, greatly tending to the dishonor of Almighty God, and that may prove destructive to the peace and welfare of this kingdom.”

“If any Popish bishop, priest, or Jesuit whatsoever,” says the third clause of the 11th and 12th of William, chapter 4th, “shall say mass or exercise any other part of the office or function of a Popish bishop or priest within these realms, &c., or if any Papist, &c., shall keep school or take upon themselves the education or government or boarding of youth in any place within this realm, &c. every such person shall, on conviction, be adjudged to perpetual imprisonment.” If, on the contrary, any person should be convicted of sending his child abroad to be educated in the Romish religion, he



was to forfeit one hundred pounds, by the sixth clause of the same act. By the fourth clause, if a Papist took not the oath of supremacy (which a Papist could not take, — Sir Thomas More could not, nor Bishop Fisher, and they were therefore put to death), he was “disabled and made incapable to *inherit* or take by descent,” &c., &c.; and if, again, he was possessed of any capital in money, he was equally disabled from purchasing lands. In the former case, the land bequeathed was even to go to the next of kin who was a Protestant. Such was the state of the public toleration with respect to the Papists.

With respect to the Arians and Socinians, the act of the 9th and 10th of William (c. 32, p. 275) declares, that, if any person, “having been educated in, or at any time having made profession of, the Christian religion within this realm, shall, by writing, printing, teaching, or advised speaking, deny any one of the persons in the Holy Trinity to be God, or shall assert or maintain there are more Gods than one, or shall deny the Christian religion to be true, or the Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testament to be of divine authority,” such person shall, for the first offence, be disabled from enjoying any office, ecclesiastical, civil, or military; and, if a second time convicted of the said crimes, “shall from thenceforth be disabled to sue, prosecute, plead, or use any action or information, in any court of law or equity, or to be guardian of any child, or executor or administrator of any person, or capable of any legacy or deed of gift, or to bear any office, civil or military, or benefice ecclesiastical, for ever within this realm, and shall also suffer imprisonment for the space of three years without bail,” &c.

Acts of Parliament like these make a considerable approach to the excommunication of the Romish see in the Dark Ages. The truth of the doctrines, and of the principles which these acts were meant to propagate and secure, is no part of the question now before us. Truth cannot be so propagated, and must not, even if it were possible, be so secured. The intelligence and humanity of the present age would revolt from acts of Parliament like these. Such is the happy influence of general prosperity and of a free government, not only on the community, but on the mistaken men who forget, in the ardor of their zeal, and the supposed duties of their situation, all the rights of the human mind, and all the precepts of their divine Master. But these acts must ever remain portions of historical reading, as indicative of the nature of the human mind on these important subjects.

Before I conclude my lecture, I must allude, however shortly, to the second object of inquiry which I originally proposed: the foreign politics of William, or the history of the civil and religious liberties of Europe.

The general description of this part of our labors may be short. Louis was everywhere the enemy of mankind; William their defend-

er. His campaigns against the celebrated Luxembourg, the peace of Ryswick, the two partition treaties, and the renewal of the general confederacy against France, just before the death of William, form the chief topics of examination and reflection. Particulars respecting these subjects may be found in the Memoirs of St. Simon; in Burnet's History of his own Times; in the Hardwicke Papers; and, finally, there is an estimate of the whole subject in Bolingbroke's Letters on History, in the seventh and eighth, — an estimate so full, so reasonable, and in every respect so masterly, that it is useless for me to do more than refer to it.

Macpherson has written a History of Great Britain from the Restoration to the Accession of the House of Hanover. This History may always be resorted to, whenever an unfavorable representation is wanted of the conduct or character of William. Yet, even with respect to that part of our subject which is at present before us, the foreign politics of William, Macpherson is obliged to allow, that William was placed at the head of his native country as the last hope of her safety from conquest and a foreign yoke; that he was raised to the throne of Great Britain under the name of her deliverer from civil tyranny and religious persecution; that he was considered in the same important light by the rest of Europe; that the Empire, Spain, and Italy looked up to his counsels as their only resource against the exorbitant ambition and power of Louis the Fourteenth; and that France herself, when she affected to despise his power the most, owned his importance by an illiberal joy upon a false report of his death. Higher praise than this cannot possibly be received. Men who engage in the affairs of the world, and have talents sufficient to influence and control them as William did, can neither appear to be nor can really be without decided faults. But if such be the bright side of any human character, we may turn away from its obscurities.

William was a patriot and a hero, but not a successful warrior. It was said that he had raised more sieges and lost more battles than any general of his age. But he was opposed to the most consummate commanders that even France has produced; and his own armies were composed of the officers and soldiers of different nations. "His defeats," says Bolingbroke, "were manifestly due, in a great measure, to circumstances independent on him; and that spirit which even these defeats could not depress was all his own. He had difficulties in his own commonwealth; the governors of the Spanish Low Countries crossed his measures sometimes; the German allies disappointed and broke them often; and it is not improbable that he was frequently betrayed."

The peace of Ryswick was loudly censured by the French politicians. It may be considered, on the whole, as a monument to the glory of William. With respect to the partition treaties, the letters in the Hardwicke Papers sufficiently exculpate William from the cen



tures and accusations of his detractors. They have been defended by Bolingbroke as the only measure which the king had it in his power to take.

The wars of William on the Continent may be read in the accounts of the reign. They are portions of history, and must be considered. I cannot enter into any detail or even description of such transactions. But I may stop, perhaps, to mention, that they are now connected with the literature of our own country, — that they give life and beauty to some of the pages of Sterne. Steenkirk, and Landen, and Count Solms, and the siege of Namur are names well known to those who are conversant with the writings of that enchanting, but sometimes objectionable author; and the student, while he is travelling through the records of *real* calamity, and contemplating in history the picture of the dreadful warfare of mankind, may be often reminded of those more pleasing moments when he surrendered his fancy to the harmless campaigns of my Uncle Toby and Trim, and his heart to the story of Lefevre.

I conclude this reign of William with observing, that almost all the important subjects connected, not only with our constitution, such as I have mentioned, but also with our systems of internal and external policy, appear before us during this particular period. A union with Scotland was recommended by William; the case of Ireland occurred, — its dependence on the legislature of England; the affairs of the East India Company were considered; the Bank of England was erected; societies for the suppression of vice were formed; the employment of the poor was made a topic in the speeches of the king; the coinage was adjusted; experiments on finance and paper securities were attempted; and, above all, a funded debt was created.

These are subjects and concerns that have subsisted to the present times; and it is now the business of a reader of history to observe them on their first appearance, with the reasonings of our ancestors upon them, in the speeches and pamphlets of the day. They must be borne in mind, and traced, if possible, through their effects, as we continue to read the history of the last century, down to the present hour. To them must be added, and to be treated in the same manner, and for the same reason, the great question of the interference of England in the affairs of the Continent; an interference which now began more particularly to be a feature of our general policy, and therefore from this time began to be, as it has never ceased to be, a subject of controversy and discussion among our philosophers and statesmen.

## LECTURE XXIII.

## ANNE.

THE reign of William is interesting on many accounts: from its immediate connection with the Revolution of 1688; from the suspense in which the cause of that Revolution still hung, on account of the parties that then existed; from the conduct of William to those parties; from their conduct to him and to each other; from their relative merits; from the relation which questions connected with the monarch and such parties must *always* bear to our mixed and free constitution; from the great subjects that occurred in the course of the administration of William, — the Civil List, the Place Bill, the Triennial Bill, the liberty of the press, a standing army, the responsibility of ministers, the veto of the crown; from many other subjects connected with our internal and external policy, — the situation of Ireland, the East India Company, the Bank of England, questions of finance, of the coinage, the funded debt, and others, such as I could only mention. These are topics that must always deserve the attention of the inhabitants of these kingdoms. The very narrative of the reign is also interesting, and full of events and business, foreign and military, as well as civil and domestic; add to this, that this era of our annals has always been highly attractive to the readers of history. William is not only the deliverer of England, but the great hero of the age in which he lived; and they who have accustomed themselves to meditate on the characters of men, and the fortunes of the human race, have always lamented that the story of William has never been undertaken by any writer so distinguished for the superiority of his talents as to be worthy of a theme so splendid and so important.

This lecture was written many years ago, but at this moment, while I am now reading it, occurs the great subject of regret to literary men, and particularly those interested in the history of their country, the loss of Sir James Mackintosh. This great thinker and accomplished writer was worthy of such a theme, and had undertaken it; what he has left us is the best account we have of the first ominous proceedings of the reign of James the Second.

The reign of Anne may be considered as a continuation of the reign of William. The great features are the same: national animosity against France; resistance to the aggrandizement and the ambition of Louis; contending parties, the Whigs and Tories; the constitution settling; and the great question of the return of the exiled family — that is, the success of the Revolution, — that is, the



cause of the civil and religious liberties of England — still suspended on a shifting, doubtful balance.

Our best means of information are likewise the same. St. Simon and the French writers, Burnet, Macpherson's Original Papers, the debates in Parliament, the Statute-Book and Journals, Tindal, Belsham, and Somerville, are to be read or referred to in the same manner as before. To these sources of information, on which I originally depended, I can now add the Life of Marlborough, by Mr. Coxe, which has been lately completed from the Blenheim papers. To write the life of Marlborough is to write the history of the reign of Queen Anne; and it is impossible for any one to judge properly of this part of our annals without a diligent perusal of this very entertaining and valuable work. I must also observe, that a very good idea may be formed of the general subjects connected with this period, and of the original memoirs and documents which should be referred to, by reading the appendix to Belsham's History: it is very well drawn up.

My hearer, therefore, will bear in mind, that the great subjects before him are, the resistance made to Louis the Fourteenth and the power of France, abroad; and at home, the different parties of the Whigs and Tories, the various questions that arose connected with our civil and religious liberties, the union with Scotland, and, above all, the great question of the success of the Revolution, the security of the Protestant succession, and the chance of the restoration of the house of Stuart.

We will first advert to the foreign concerns; afterwards to the domestic. Many subjects must necessarily be omitted, and cannot even be mentioned, but they will occur to you in the reading of the history; some can be but adverted to; a few, and but a few, on account of their superior importance, may be a little dwelt upon; but on this occasion, and on every other through the whole of these lectures, I am oppressed with the consciousness that I can attempt little more than barely lead up my hearer to the consideration of different subjects, and, having stated their claim upon his attention, must leave him to examine them for himself.

The reign opens with the great War of the Succession. I have already observed, that questions of peace and war are peculiarly deserving of attention. They cannot be made too often or too much the subjects of your examination. No more valuable result can be derived from the meditation of history than habits of dispassionate reflection, of caution, foresight, a strong sense of the rights of independent nations, of justice, and of humanity, on such momentous topics. It is on these occasions more particularly that the philosophic statesman is distinguished from the ordinary politician; and when we suppose a minister in a cabinet, a member of either of the Houses in his place, an individual at a public meeting, or an intelligent man in the private circles of social life, contributing to make

his countrymen more upright, reasonable, conciliatory, patient, while the tremendous issues of war are dependent, are hanging on the balance of words and expressions, are dependent not merely on the wisdom or the folly, but the good and ill humor of the parties, we, in fact, suppose a man elevated to something above his nature, and for a season assuming the character and office of a superior being, one whose voice breathes the heavenly accents of peace on earth and good-will towards men. In a government that is free, where every individual is educated upon a system, not of servility and baseness, but of personal dignity and independence, of submission to no power but the laws, — in such a government, one like our own, there is no fear, on these occasions, of any want of sensibility to national honor, or of any contemptible sacrifice to present ease and short-sighted policy. The danger is on the other side, and the habits of thought to be cherished in free and powerful countries are entirely those of a deliberative, cautious, and pacific nature.

The opening of this reign of Anne affords an opportunity to the student such as I have described. One of these great questions is before him, that of the War of the Succession, a long and dreadful contest. Let him try to examine and consider it in all its bearings and aspects; and in this manner he may school his mind, and prepare it for important occasions, when he is hereafter to interfere, as every man of education ought actively to do, in the concerns of the community.

I will now make an effort to give him some slight idea of what I mean, some idea of the subject now presented to him; and I must begin, in point of time, at some distance from the period more immediately before us.

At the peace of the Pyrenees, Mazarin united the royal family of France with that of Spain. As this union might eventually make the princes of the house of Bourbon heirs to the crown of Spain, this was always looked upon as a masterpiece of policy.

The first question which I would propose to the student is, whether it was so. The king of Spain was at the time sufficiently aware of the possible consequences, and he therefore took due care that all title to the future succession to the crown of Spain, of whatever kind, should be publicly and for ever renounced. This is a part of the case, and, being so, the policy of the whole transaction, as far as Mazarin is concerned, may, I think, be proposed as a question.

Among other considerations that will occur to the student when he looks at the history, I would wish to leave the following more particularly to his examination:—

First, whether the avoidance of all causes of war, and all temptations to war, is not the first point of policy to be secured.

Secondly, whether the union of the families was likely to influence materially the future intercourse of the two nations, and make it more



friendly than it hitherto had been. If so, this was a most weighty consideration in favor of the measure. But, on the other side, and

Thirdly, whether the union of the families did not rather hold up to the ambition of all succeeding princes of France the most tempting object, the succession to the crown of Spain, and yet the renunciation render that ambition totally unlawful; and whether the result was not, therefore, sure to be, that France would be engaged in a series of dishonest intrigues for the accomplishment of this object, and afterwards in a war with the powers of Europe for the maintenance of this unlawful object, if those intrigues were successful, — for the acquiescence of the powers of Europe, without a struggle, could not possibly be expected.

Now, if this last question be answered in the affirmative, as well as the first, where was the policy of Mazarin?

The event turned out to be, that the prospect of the succession kept continually opening to Louis, and that his family at last became the regular heirs to the Spanish monarchy. But it must not be forgotten that they were incapacitated by their renunciation. This renunciation was the very condition of their birth, for it was the condition on which Louis was married to the Infanta of Spain, in right of whom they claimed.

I must now recommend the sixty-seventh chapter in Coxe's *Austria*, where the subject of the Spanish succession is concisely and clearly stated, and on the proper authorities. The claimants were the Dauphin of France, the Emperor Leopold, who had married the next sister of the Infanta, and the Elector of Bavaria, who had espoused the issue of this last marriage, and was the son-in-law of Leopold. The father, Leopold, it must be observed, had induced his daughter, on her marriage with the elector, to renounce her claims to the Spanish succession; but this renunciation was considered invalid, as not having been approved by the king of Spain, nor ratified by the Cortes.

In this state of things, the second question that I should wish to propose to the student is this: — What was our own King William to attempt to do? How was he to prevent the succession from devolving on Louis, a prince who was not likely to adhere to his original renunciations? As I have before recommended Coxe, I must now recommend the eighth letter of Bolingbroke on the *Study of History*, as the most ready and complete means of putting you into possession of all the reasonings that belong to the subject. I must suppose these parts, both of Coxe and Bolingbroke, read, particularly the latter. I cannot give any abridgment or representation of it, because I think the meditation of the whole of it the very best practice, to use a common term, for a statesman, that perhaps the compass of our literature affords.

William made a partition treaty with Louis; that is, he compound

ed with him. He consented that *part* of the Spanish possessions should be transferred to France, the better to secure the remainder from the ambition of Louis; and to this end, that the elector might receive, undisturbed, the main part of what, by inheritance, devolved upon him, — that in this manner the balance of Europe might be tolerably well preserved, and yet a war avoided. These were his objects. Lord Bolingbroke contends that there was no other measure which William could possibly take. He is great authority, and cannot be supposed too partial to the monarch.

Unfortunately, the elector died, and a second partition treaty was therefore to be made; the archduke was substituted for the elector, and the terms made more advantageous to France. Now the point I would submit to your consideration is this: — Whether, besides the alternatives which Lord Bolingbroke enumerates as all that the case admitted of, another did not remain, — that of doing nothing at all; not abandoning all care of the succession, but taking no distinct measure, — certainly none but with the privity of, and in conjunction with, the court of Spain. To parcel out the dominions of an independent kingdom, however agreeably to the general interests of Europe, and from the best of motives, without the interference or consent of that kingdom, was in itself unjust, and therefore not to be thought of; and was at the same time so offensive to Spain, that it could not possibly have any other effect but that of throwing her into the arms of France, for the sake of preserving the integrity of her empire and the dignity of her crown.

What line of policy, in the mean time, was the emperor to pursue? Of this there can be little question; he was to send to the court of Spain a minister of attractive manners, and, by conciliating at the same time his own Hungarian subjects, to leave himself in possession of the full force of his empire, in case he had to contend with France. The emperor did neither: he neither sent a minister of an agreeable, accommodating temper, nor did he relax his harsh, severe system of policy to his Hungarian subjects. It seems impossible for the haughty and ceremonious ever to think there is any thing of value in the world but dignity and form; and the policy of mild government is a secret which, on some account or other, can never be discovered by those who have an opportunity of exercising it.

But to return to the succession. The king of Spain died, and, most unfortunately, at last made a will in favor of the French line.

Here comes the next question: Was Louis to accept the testament? On this point must be read, not only Lord Bolingbroke, but that part of the Works of St. Simon which relates to the succession; it is not long. In De Torcy's Memoirs will be found the defence of Louis, who *did* accept the testament; and in Mably's "*Droit Public de l'Europe*" (not his History), an argument in opposition to the reasoning of De Torcy, and in favor of adhering to the treaty of par-



tion. Many other books might be referred to; but these will be found very ample to supply the reader with materials for his meditation. He is to suppose himself placed in the cabinet of Louis, and then to consider what advice he would have given.

In the third volume of St. Simon's Memoirs, and in De Torcy, will be found accounts of the debate that actually did take place in the presence of Louis. There is some little difference in the representations of these two authors with respect to the part which the speakers took; and Madame de Maintenon was consulted, according to St. Simon, which is positively denied (though it is somewhat impossible to suppose that she was not) by De Torcy.

The question debated was, whether the king should accept the testament, or adhere to the second partition treaty; and the case supposed was (which was, indeed, the fact), that the succession was to be offered instantly to the house of Austria, if declined by the French monarch. On the one side it was observed, even in the cabinet of Louis, — "The national faith is pledged" (I translate from the French writers); "and even in point of mere advantage, more will in fact be gained by the partition treaty than by placing the French line on the throne of Spain; the princes of which will soon lose their partiality to France, and become as jealous of her power as have hitherto been the princes of the house of Austria. If we accept the testament, a war must follow; Europe will necessarily oppose itself to what will then be thought the colossal power of France. We have already had one war; we are now only taking breath; we are ourselves exhausted; so is Spain; of a new war it will be for us to support all the charge. We have here, therefore, before us a train of consequences of which the final issue no one can presume to tell; but in the gross, and at once, it is easy to pronounce that it is but common prudence to avoid them by adhering to the partition treaty. France, by this proof of her good faith, will conciliate all Europe, — Europe, which she has seen leagued against her because she has been considered as aspiring, like the house of Austria, to universal monarchy; and if she now accept this testament, will the truth of these accusations admit longer of a doubt?"

Such was, according to the more probable account of St. Simon, the statement of De Torcy himself, — offered by him as the statement of *one* side of the question. But such were entirely, and stated as a proper estimate of the whole of the case, the sentiments of the Duc de Beauvilliers, the tutor of the Duke of Burgundy, the discerning and good man who had selected Fénelon to assist him in his momentous office; and similar to these are always the sentiments of discerning and good men on all such occasions. These are the natural and weighty topics that are insisted upon by all such reasoners, when peace and war can be made a question: national faith; the opinions of surrounding nations on our conduct; what there is, or what there

may be, of justice in their accusations; the advantages that may assuredly be derived from peace; the evils that inevitably result from war; the calamities that will certainly, the very serious ruin that it is possible, at least, *may*, result from dangerous experiments.

In the instance before us, the successes of Marlborough, the appearance of such a commander among the enemies of France, could not, indeed, have been expected by Louis or his counsellors. But even according to the ordinary nature of events, there were not only possibilities, but there were probabilities; and there were certainties sufficient to induce the Duc de Beauvilliers to insist, as he did insist, on the solid wisdom of the counsels which he recommended.

The chancellor, on the contrary, too much disposed, as it is thought by St. Simon, to sacrifice to the wishes of his master, (such men will always be found among the counsellors of princes,) presented to Louis views more splendid and reasonings more attractive. He found it easy to show how fitted were the kingdoms of France and Spain to constitute a great empire under the dominion of the house of Bourbon. There was no difficulty in depreciating the advantages presented by the treaty of partition, or in rendering suspected the policy of any system to which William, the great enemy of France, had become a party. It was not difficult to show that it must always make a very material difference to France, whether there were seated on the throne of Spain princes of the house of Bourbon or princes of the house of Austria, however interested the former might at length become in the prosperity of the particular kingdom which they governed. These were topics of fair debate, provided the question could ever have been brought to a point where it was proper to discuss them.

The chancellor also insisted, that, since the treaties of partition were made, new circumstances had occurred which rendered them no longer binding: the testament, for instance, had been made in Louis's favor. This is the sort of dishonest reasoning that on all such occasions is produced, and it is therefore universally instructive. For the chancellor omitted to state, that the testament had been procured by the intrigues of France, and that Louis was thus to profit by his own wrong.

Again: "France," said the minister, "by refusing the testament, will gain, *not* the character of moderation, but that of pusillanimity; will become an object of ridicule, not of respect, to surrounding nations, as was our good Louis the Twelfth, and Francis the First, to Ferdinand, Charles the Fifth, the Pope, and the Venetians: not, indeed, that the point of honor is against us," said the chancellor. "Can it be supposed that such a succession as that of Spain is ever to fall into our hands without a war? Even to the treaty of partition the emperor will not assent. And if, then, we are, on every supposition, to have a war, is it not better to fight for the proper benefits



of success, after first possessing ourselves of what is already within our grasp? Let us at least contrive not to show ourselves to the world unworthy of the high fortune to which we are so unexpectedly called."

These also are, I think, arguments universally instructive; for it is by considerations of this kind that nations are always inflamed, their passions excited, and their judgments betrayed by their orators, statesmen, and princes. It is even by considerations of this kind that they who should counsel others are themselves led astray; and these, therefore, as they continually occur in history, become the genuine instruction of history.

On the whole of the case, Louis might accept the testament. He did so. The defence of this measure will be found in De Torcy, and in the reasons given by the chancellor in St. Simon.

Secondly, he might have rejected the testament, and adhered to the remaining partition treaty. This measure is proposed and supported by the Abbé de Mably.

Lastly, he might have done neither. The whole question is argued by Lord Bolingbroke. But when he considers it under three different views, — the view of right, of policy, and of power, — the first, that of right, is surely too loosely determined, and too hastily dismissed.

The fact was, that, when the Spanish line was originally connected with the French, every precaution was taken by the Spanish monarch to prevent a crisis of the nature that afterwards took place, and all future title to the crown of Spain, whether by treaty, will, testament, or otherwise, was renounced. Louis the Fourteenth, therefore, should not have left William to suppose that the treaties of partition were at all necessary. He should not have thought it honorable to receive any advantages which could be offered him only on the supposition that he was not likely to fulfil his original engagements. On the same account he should not have accepted the testament, for to accept it was contrary to the spirit and meaning of the most positive and solemn engagements. The testament itself would never have been made in his favor, if he from the first had openly and sincerely disclaimed the succession, and had spoken from the first steadily and clearly the language of uprightness and honor. Whatever right the monarch of Spain might have to offer Louis the succession by his testament, Louis had no right to receive it. The offer had been made in consequence of a long series of intrigues, all of them in every respect, and from the first, dishonorable to him and base. Their success could give Louis no right which belonged not to him before. He was not to profit, as I have before observed, by his own wrong.

The question of ambition and aggrandizement, the considerations that alone weighed with him and some of his counsellors, may be disposed of with a rapidity that would have been inconceivable to Louis and his cabinet. To France, above all kingdoms, the most effective

means of aggrandizement were peace, and justice, and honor. Her people full of genius and activity, her territories pregnant with the most varied and inestimable advantages, she had only to defend herself, and, if possible, keep Europe at peace, and she could not fail of being prosperous and happy.

The politicians of the world have never ceased on these subjects to commit, as did first Mazarin, and afterwards Louis, the most cruel mistakes. The gain of one country has always been supposed the loss of every other : colonies are to be fought for, and commerce is to be fought for, and kingdoms are to be fought for, and all for the sake of prosperity and power. Human life is to be wasted, all the proper materials of strength and accumulation are to be dissipated and annihilated, to be directed to the purposes of destruction, and every experiment is to be attempted but one, the only proper and rational experiment, that of making governments gradually more free, the laws more equal, and the maintaining of peace.

Turning now from the Continent, the next question before us is the conduct of our own country, and the point to be determined is, whether we had no honorable or safe alternative but war. William the Third had but just time before his death to decide that we had no other. He thought the ambition of Louis left no other.

The reign of Anne opens with the speeches of the queen to the Privy Council and the two Houses, with their answers. Mention is here made of measures entered into to reduce the exorbitant power of France, to obtain such a balance of power and interests as may effectually secure the liberties of Europe. This is the language of reason and sound policy. But the causes of the war are more distinctly shown in the declaration of war itself, and the question then is, whether the acknowledgment of the pretended Prince of Wales by Louis, under all the circumstances of the case, was such an affront to the English crown as could be vindicated only by a war, and whether representations had been made to Louis, on the subject of his aggressions and offences, sufficiently patient and conciliatory to render the war on our part a war for the defence of the balance of power in Europe, and therefore for our own dignity and safety; whether no reparation could be procured to our honor, but by arms; whether the offence was sufficient to justify such an extremity; whether it was reasonable to expect that the affair of the succession could now be materially altered for the better by an appeal to force, and the renewal of the calamities of Europe.

These are questions that may fairly be supposed open to discussion, for the national animosity to France was, on all occasions, very strong, and even Tories and Whigs united when a sentiment was to be expressed of hostility to that kingdom.

But whatever may be the decision of the student on the general question (and it may turn out to be very different from what he might



at first have expected), let him carefully remember, that it was to reduce the exorbitant power of France, and to vindicate the honor of the English crown, insulted by the acknowledgment of the pretended Prince of Wales, — that *these* were the objects of the war, and that war was, on every supposition, no longer to be maintained when these objects were once accomplished. All this is, I say, to be well remembered; for we may remember it, perhaps, with some advantage hereafter, when we come to the remaining transactions of the reign, — those more particularly connected with our foreign politics. This war with France is the great centre on which they all turn, and therefore, with respect to our foreign politics, the two great points of attention which I shall propose to you are, — first, the character and victories of Marlborough; secondly, the use that was made of them.

On these subjects the historical works of Mr. Coxe must be studied: first, his House of Austria; secondly, his Memoirs of the Kings of Spain; and lastly, and more particularly, his Life of the Duke of Marlborough.

This last work I have had to consider since I drew up my present lecture. I have had to modify a little my opinion of the Duke of Marlborough. I can no longer consider him as so betrayed by a spirit of personal ambition as I had once suspected; for he seems not to have been more ready to persevere in the war against France than Godolphin and others, and sometimes to have been more reasonable; and I have a still stronger impression of his amiable nature in domestic life.

Of his talents for public life, I could not have entertained a higher opinion than I had already formed; the same must have been always the opinion of every reader of history. The great Duke of Marlborough has always been his proper appellation, and he is only made greater by being made more known from the publication of Mr. Coxe; nor can it be doubted that he would appear greater still, the more the difficulties with which he was surrounded on all occasions could be appreciated. These difficulties, however, may now, from the work just mentioned, be partly estimated: the impetuous temper and consequent imprudence of a wife whom for her beauty, her talents, and her affection he naturally idolized; the low, narrow mind and mulish nature of the queen he served; the unreasonable wishes and strange prejudices of the men of influence in his own country; the discordant interests and passions of different states and princes on the Continent; the pertinacity of the field deputies of Holland, whom he could not send over into the camp of the enemy, their more proper station, and to whose absurdities it gave him the headache to listen. As we continue our progress through the pages of Mr. Coxe, the queen, the court, the houses of legislature, the nation, fall deeply into the shade; the duke is dismissed.

“Diram qui contudit hydram,  
Comperit invidiam supremo fine domari.”

He is actually sued for the expenses of the workmen at Blenheim; is obliged to retire to the Continent; and it is there, not in his own country, that he is to see his victories remembered and his merit acknowledged.

In Tindal's Continuation of Rapin, and now more completely in Coxe, may be read the history of his military exploits; and it is here that Marlborough seems to tower above all praise. It would be difficult to find any commander in any age or country to whom he can be thought inferior; he might rather seem to have united the merits of them all. He had the praise of Hannibal; for he had to oppose the armies of one great military nation by armies composed of many different nations. He had the praise of Cæsar; for, though an enterprising, he was a safe commander; he lost no battle; he failed in no siege; he was no desperate knight-errant, like Alexander in ancient story, or Charles the Twelfth in modern. He lived not, like Attila, or Tamerlane, among barbarous nations, when the event of a single battle decided the fate of an empire, and when, if fortune once smiled, her smiles were afterwards superfluous; nor did he live, like the great conqueror in our own times, the emperor of France, in a revolutionary age, when the new and dreadful energies of a particular nation could be seized upon and directed against surrounding nations, — against armies formed on a different model, statesmen obliged to deliberate under a different system, and governments submitted to different habits and principles of action.

The Duke of Marlborough was in no favorable situation like any of these creatures of dynasties or destroyers of kingdoms; much the contrary. He flourished when war had been reduced to a science, and when likewise it could be waged in no sweeping or convulsive manner; he had to do with regular governments, orderly statesmen, soldiers animated by no fury of enthusiasm, political or religious; princes, magistrates, financiers, officers civil and military, individuals in all their divisions and departments, moving, each of them, after the prescribed rate and fashion of society in its most civilized and appointed state; nay more, he had to sway the factions of England, to animate the legislative bodies of Holland, to harmonize the members of the Germanic body, and all to the one single purpose of overpowering on the Continent the vast, concentrated, prompt, and matured strength of France, — an object, this, which no human art or genius could ever, before or since, be properly said to have, by regular military warfare, accomplished. Even the great William, trained up amid a life of difficulties and of war, with an intrepid heart and a sound understanding, was able only to stay the enterprises of Louis, — successfully to resist, but not to humble him. It was for Marlborough to teach that unprincipled monarch the danger of ambition and the instability of



human grandeur; it was for Marlborough to disturb his dreams of pleasure and of pride, by filling them with spectres of terror and images of desolation. Of Marlborough might be said, in a far more extensive sense of the words, what was afterwards said of Lord Chat-ham, that with one hand he wielded the aristocracy of England, and with the other he smote the house of Bourbon.

The great praise of Marlborough is, that his glory was reached step by step, by no sudden indulgence of fortune, by no single effort of military skill and valor. Enterprise succeeded to enterprise, campaign to campaign, and the result was always the same, — progressive fame, and victories and triumphs either accomplished or prepared. If commanders were sent against him who made the slightest mistake, victories like Blenheim and Ramillies were the consequence. If a man of consummate skill, like Vendôme, was opposed to him, he consented to attempt nothing impracticable. No success improperly inflamed his expectations; yet could he show, as in his campaign with Villars, that no necessity of caution, no respect for his opponent, excluded from his mind the chances at least of success, and he could seize them with effect, and prove, that, whatever might be his circum-spection, he was equally gifted with the powers of military invention and the spirit of military enterprise.

The career of other great generals has always been marked by varieties of chance and change, of light and shade, of success and defeat. But the panegyric of Marlborough is contained in a single word, — he was always right; that is, he proportioned well his means to his ends, and did not, like other statesmen and generals, mistake passion for wisdom, wishes for possibilities, and words for things. On the whole, though in his character as a man some failings must be allowed, parsimony for instance, (the result so often of the necessity of economy in early life,) and the fault, the crime, of corresponding with the exiled family, — on the whole, a degrading and a most unworthy attention to his own interest, — such was his good sense, his military genius, the charms of his address and appearance, and his high and commanding qualities of every description, that he must even now be considered, what Lord Bolingbroke was compelled to call him in his day, the greatest of generals and of ministers.

Turning now from the character of the Duke of Marlborough, who won the victories that distinguished this reign, to the use that was made of them, though no difference of opinion can exist with regard to the first, much may with regard to the second question: — How far the allies were or were not unreasonable in their demands; which of the parties was most in fault during the negotiations for peace, particularly during the first, that at the Hague.

I cannot repeat too often, that questions of this sort are among the most profitable portions of study which can belong to the readers of history. We may not be able always to understand by what varie-

ties of character or of personal interest, in the agents or in the principals, negotiations break off or terminate with success; but by being removed to a distance, we can take a commanding view of what were the *real* interests of the parties at the time. Such speculations are well fitted to prepare us for the discussion of similar subjects when we come to be ourselves concerned, to save us from unreasonable terrors or extravagant hopes, and, above all, to prevent us from magnifying points, for which we have been contending, into an importance which does not belong to them, and which temporary importance becomes to succeeding politicians not unfrequently a subject of surprise, compassion, or even contempt.

The authors you must consult are Dr. Somerville, Coxe, Tindal, Dé Torcy, and, lastly, Swift's pamphlet on the Conduct of the Allies, — a pamphlet most effective at the time, but disgraced by the most vulgar matter and exaggerated statements, and therefore now very edifying as a specimen of what a party pamphlet may be, and not unfrequently is.

I cannot attempt, for want of time, any discussion of this great question. You will see what is said very fully and distinctly by Coxe. I cannot think, for my own part, that proper use, that the right use, was made by Marlborough and Godolphin of the victories of Blenheim and Ramillies; and I cannot think so, even after the perusal of every thing that this valuable historian has delivered to the contrary, in his *Life of the Duke of Marlborough*.

I must now remind you, as I apprised you I should, of the reasons for the war which were given when it first broke out. It is curious to remark the manner in which the tone of the allies *altered*, and their views enlarged, with their victories. This may be very *natural*, but it is not entirely and ultimately wise. A war is not to be entered upon without a grave and specific object; but when success has enabled a nation to obtain that object, (and this had surely been effected by the great battles just alluded to,) upon every principle of wisdom as of humanity, the war must close. If new objects are to arise, and to be considered as indispensable to peace, the system of warfare is then converted into a system to each nation the most protracted possible, and therefore the most ruinous possible, — a system more protracted than the passions of our nature, violent as they are, at all require. Peace is the great cause of human nature; it is the great secret of prosperity to all nations, collectively and individually. It is, therefore, the common policy of all; not to say, that, even according to the short-sighted notions of rivalry and selfishness, a successful nation often carries on a war too long; more is lost by the expense of an additional campaign than the advantages of a campaign do or can repay; and, what is of still more consequence, the fortune of the contest may alter.

Again, it should have been considered that those who propose fair



terms of peace, as Louis did, never fail of securing a most advantageous alternative. They obtain either a peace or a just cause. Louis, for instance, could not bring the allies to grant him honorable conditions (hard terms are never the true policy) ; he therefore published those which they had insisted upon, and he had it then in his power to say, as he did say, to his subjects, in a public address, " If it had depended on me, you should have enjoyed this blessing which you so earnestly desire, the blessing of peace ; but it must be procured by new efforts ; the immense sacrifices I have offered are of no avail. I can perfectly sympathize with all that my faithful subjects must endure, but I am persuaded they would themselves recoil from conditions of peace as repugnant to justice as to the honor of the French name." These considerations were not addressed to the French people in vain, and they never will or can be addressed in vain to any people by their rulers.

It is true, that, when the successes of the allies were so great, it then, as the Whigs thought, became to them a question, whether the opportunity was not to be taken of attempting to deprive France of all the additions which she had made to her power since the peace of Westphalia ; but surely it should rather have been thought (and long before this extreme point of depression in the affairs of France had occurred) that the failure of the succession in the family of Spain, and the provisions of the will of Charles, created a conjuncture the most unfortunate that could possibly have happened, one from which it was not in the nature of things that Europe should be able entirely to extricate itself ; that the people and grandees of Spain had clearly decided against the pretensions of the house of Austria and the projects of the allies ; that, if Europe was to be protected from the ambition of Louis, some effort of a very different nature must be made ; that the transfer of Spain and the Indies to the house of Austria was impossible, — was, at all events, the least feasible project that could be attempted ; and that, on the whole, taking into account the natural and honorable feelings of a distinguished monarch like Louis and a great nation like France, and again the same natural and honorable feelings of the grandees and people of Spain, — taking into account these important points, surely it should have been thought that all that was reasonable, and at all events all that was practicable, might have been procured by the allies at an early period immediately after the battle of Ramillies, or even before, and certainly during the negotiation at the Hague.

The Whigs ought, surely, to have been eager to make the best bargain for Europe which they could, from the obvious probability that the queen, who always hated and feared them, as they well knew, would contrive to get other ministers, and the consequence be a peace on terms much less advantageous to England and the Continent than they could themselves obtain. They might easily see how

difficult it was to keep up a combination of powers against France, and how many chances and how many reasons might make a war unpopular.

These I conceive to be some of the points for you to consider; and you should fix your attention on early periods in the war, immediately after the battle of Ramillies, and rather on the negotiations that preceded than those that took place at Geertruidenberg; the peace should have been made long *before* the conferences at Geertruidenberg. They who would decide this question in the shortest time possible may take into their consideration a few pages in the different chapters of Coxe's *Austria*, and Somerville's *History of Queen Anne*.

I cannot but observe, as I am finally quitting this subject of the use which the allies made of their victories, that, in every free government, it is the interest of the members of a cabinet, even with a view to their own personal aggrandizement, to proceed as much as possible on a system of peace; for the uneasiness which is occasioned by the pressure of war is very easily converted by their political opponents into the means of dislodging them from their power. In all free governments, those who make a war, as was the case in the present instance, seldom make a peace; war comes at last, with or without due reason, to be unpopular; and the war and its advisers are discarded together.

Again, from the whole of the War of the Succession, it is evident how great must always be the difficulty of supporting a combination of many states against one. Their interests, or at least their own views of their interests, are seldom the same while the war is carried on, still less when peace begins to be thought of. It is very difficult to combine them so as to render them successful for any long period. Prosperity disunites them, from jealousy; adversity still more, from views of self-preservation.

In combinations of different powers, the great duty of all is disinterestedness. In this respect the Whig ministry of England set an example highly creditable to their characters as wise and honorable statesmen. They might mistake (it is a great question) the wisdom of the case at the proper season; but their language and their views were, resistance to the ambition of France, the establishment of the general interests of Europe.

But the question is, whether they suffered not the justice of the cause at last to be transferred to the French monarch. He had recourse to negotiation, was unsuccessful, and then appealed to his people and to the world. I must ask again, — Were the allies and their ministers sufficiently attentive to the claims of humanity and to all the suggestions of sober policy at home and abroad, on this occasion, and in the course of these successes? To me it appears not.



If the rulers of mankind would not mix their own passions in the contests of nations, it is impossible that these appeals to negotiation should not be more frequent, it is impossible that wars should be drawn out to the protracted period we so often witness. All parties would be thrown more and more into a state of deliberation; would be reminded of the desirableness of peace; that it is the proper and only end of all war; that the real causes of hostility are always exaggerated; that in these cases there is nothing to be met with but misapprehension, fury, and absurdity. But the whole system of national policy is mistaken, and cabinets, instead of considering how their own nation may be extricated from a contest with safety and honor, think only how the enemy may be reduced to the lowest possible state of depression, how their own views of political aggrandizement may be realized, how their own particular nation may be left hereafter without an equal, and the rest of mankind be taught to fall down and worship themselves and their countrymen. I cannot further allude to this question, and it must now be left to your own diligence and curiosity.

As you proceed in the general history, you will find the influence of Marlborough and the Whig ministry gradually decline, and at last a new Tory ministry formed, and a peace concluded. These events will be found sufficiently explained in the authors I have already referred to; and after their details have been perused, the account which the Duchess of Marlborough herself gives of her conduct, from her first coming to court till the year 1710, should by all means be read. It is not long, is sometimes important, and always entertaining.

But peace was at last made, and made by the Tories. Some opinion should be formed of the merits of it, and of the negotiations that led to it.

To the account that is given by the regular historians should be added the third volume of the *Memoirs of De Torcy*. It is still the French statement and view of the case, but even as such it should be read. The work, however, is not only in many places characteristic of the nation to which the author belongs, but the notices that are to be found of the English people and of the views and characters of the parties of our island are often amusing and instructing. It may serve to display the nature of negotiations, the difficulties that continually arise, and the patience and dexterity that are always necessary to compose the differences of belligerent powers, even when the negotiators themselves feel and know that it is their interest to come to an adjustment.

When the detail of these transactions has been read in *De Torcy* and our common historians, the *Correspondence of Bolingbroke*, which was not long ago published by Mr. Parke, should be looked at. It touches only on the surface of these important negotiations, but, after the detail is known, the rapid allusions and brief notices that

are taken by the Secretary Bolingbroke, from time to time, of these affairs, are not without their interest. Those of Prior's letters which appear here are lively and entertaining; so are, indeed, those of Bolingbroke; but from a correspondence of this sort we expect to acquire a greater insight into the transactions to which they refer than, it must be confessed, we can here obtain.

The merits of the peace of Utrecht was a question which you will perceive, from the occurrences that took place in and out of Parliament during the close of this and the opening of the succeeding reign, extremely agitated the public mind. There is a short disquisition on the subject in the twentieth chapter of Somerville, to which I must refer. The historian there arrives at a conclusion which appears to me reasonable, — that the peace was censurable rather as being disproportioned to the success of the war than as having fallen short of the ends of the grand alliance.

The question of the peace, as between the Whigs and Tories, may be seen argued in the eighth letter of Bolingbroke on the Study and Use of History, and in the reply of the first Horace Walpole.\* It cannot be denied that the French court saw that it would be the personal interest of the English ministers to make a peace; that of this advantage France was ready, most ungenerously to those ministers, to avail herself; and that the English ministers exerted themselves in no proper manner to preclude France from any such advantage. They in no respect showed, as they ought to have done, that, though desirous of peace, as good and wise men should always be, — that, though cooler and more equitable in this important respect than the Whigs, — still, they were as determined as the Whigs to make a common cause with Europe against the power of France; and that, whatever France might conceive with respect to their personal interest as leaders of a party in England, they would still do nothing in consistent with their character as the arbiters (for such they were at the time) of the great interests of the most civilized portion of mankind.

De Torcy, through the whole of the third volume of his Memoirs, cannot help repeatedly contrasting with pleasure the existing and the former situation of France; and these expressions, connected with the attendant circumstances of the case, amount to something like a reproach to the Tory ministers, with whom France had now to deal, in stead of Marlborough and the Whigs.

Again, it cannot be denied that Harley, the first minister in the Tory administration, by the shuffling, temporizing, and narrow nature of his mind, was totally unfit to compose the differences and adjust the interests of Europe at that remarkable crisis. Bolingbroke should have been the Tory minister, not Harley, if any great and de-

\* Horatio Lord Walpole, brother to Sir Robert. See Memoirs, by Coxe. — N.



cisive alteration was to be made in the policy and measures of the country, and if a peace was to be attempted. England would not then have been disgraced by some of the wretched and even dishonorable measures that were resorted to. Bolingbroke, in his very curious close of his eighth letter, seems often to defend more than he can approve, — to defend measures of which certainly he would not have been the author, and to some of which, it is to be hoped, if prime minister, he would not have submitted.

To the general train and object of Bolingbroke's very able and spirited reasonings, the Memoirs of De Torcy seem to me, though little intended for any such purpose, to be a very adequate reply. The question is not, whether the Whigs made a proper use of their success in war, when they came to negotiations for a peace, but, when that question has been decided, as I think it must be, against the Whigs, the question is, whether, next, the Tory ministers made fair use of that success, and whether *they* conducted themselves in a spirit of good faith with their allies, or proper sympathy with the great interests of their country. This second question must, I think, be determined against them, — decidedly, and even with indignation.

Since I wrote the lecture which I have now delivered, the work of Mr. Coxe has appeared, his Memoirs of the Kings of Spain of the House of Bourbon. Every subject that I have now alluded to is here treated very fully, and I must refer to it. I have not found any occasion to alter what I had written. I do not admire the Tory ministry any more than Mr. Coxe; but whether the Whigs, from the first, were sufficiently moderate and disposed to peace, is another question. Mr. Coxe's work is in many places entertaining, and is, on the whole, a valuable accession to our historical information; but, in the present state of the world and of literature, I suspect that much of the work will be passed over with a slight perusal by the general reader.

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## LECTURE XXIV.

ANNE.

THE reign of Anne is distinguished, even in the annals of England, for the violence of its politics. Party violence has been not uncommonly a topic of censure and lamentation with good men, and their accusations and reproaches have been urged often with sincerity and sometimes with reason; but care must be taken on these occasions,

both by those who are disposed to make these indiscriminate indictments, and those who are disposed to listen to them. It is in itself rather a suspicious circumstance, when men who are at all conversant with the business of the world are found expressing themselves very strongly or very often against the violence of parties or the fury of factions. In a mixed and free government, there will naturally arise, as I must for ever repeat, two great and leading divisions, — those who lean to the side of authority, and those who lean to the side of privilege. Questions unlike in name and form will often involve the same general principles, and men are not, therefore, always as inconsistent as they seem. Trains of measures will often emanate from one point, and proceed in the most strictly logical succession, and must therefore be supported and resisted always by the same men. It is, therefore, not possible that those who are really independent and sincere should not often, in free legislative assemblies, vote in sets and parties, and it is equally impossible that they should not become inflamed by sympathy and collision. Read the works of Soame Jenyns, and of Locke. Would not both of these men, for instance, while they retained their integrity, have been seen always on the opposite sides of any question that could affect the constitution and government of a free country?

The real and proper topic for lamentation and reproach is not, exactly, that men are often violent and systematic in their opposition to each other, but that they do not adopt their principles with sufficient care, and then follow them up with sincerity and honor. Moderate men, as they call themselves, and men of no party, as they profess themselves to be, will generally be found to be men who take little concern or are but ill informed on political subjects; and if they are members of the legislature, they are pretty uniformly observed, as they are of no party, forsooth, to take care to be of that party which is the strongest, — to be of the minister's party, be he who he may, and to benefit by their neutrality. It is possible, indeed, for men to be of no party, and to assume the high station of real patriots; and even when they are of a party, to remain patriots, by refusing to sanction those measures of the party which they disapprove. This is, perhaps, the highest possible ambition of an intelligent and virtuous man; but such an eminence can be attained only on one hard condition, that of never receiving a favor from those in power.

I may recur to this subject on some occasion hereafter; for the present, however, I conclude by observing, that the causes of political animosity were, in these times, very peculiarly weighty and animating. The questions that often lay between the parties were, in reality, what family was to possess the throne; whether the title of the crown was to be founded on divine and hereditary right, or on the principles of an original contract, that is, whether on arbitrary or free principles; whether the religion established in the country was



to be certainly Protestant, or probably Roman Catholic ; in a word, whether principles decidedly favorable, or principles clearly hostile, to the civil and religious liberties of the country were to be maintained and established.

But in a sort of connection with this subject, I may mention, that, in a mixed government like this, the attention of those who wish well to the popular part of it has been always very naturally directed to the influence which the executive power can directly exercise on the legislative bodies, by means of posts, places, and pensions, given to their members. Place bills have, therefore, at different times been attempted ; and efforts of this kind were also made in the reign which we are now considering, and with some success. It is to be observed, however, that it seems not now to have been any longer proposed, that *every* man should necessarily be shut out of Parliament by holding an official situation. The bills were for *limiting* the number of such members, not excluding them altogether. The number, for instance, was to have been fifty ; and to limit the number is a measure of a very different complexion from a general bill of exclusion. You will see speeches in favor of and against the measure in the debates. Bills were brought into the Commons, and rejected by the Lords, one in 1712, only by a majority of five.

But instead of following the fortunes of these bills through the Houses, I shall prefer calling your attention to some observations on the general subject, which may be found drawn up by Paley in his chapter on the British Constitution. Nothing can drop from the pen of such a writer, so remarkable for his clearness and excellent sense, that can be without its importance, particularly where the subject has any immediate connection with the business of human life. This eminent reasoner, however, feels it necessary to protest against any influence but that " which results from the acceptance or expectation of public preferments," — nay more, against any influence which requires " any sacrifice of personal probity." This last seems a large concession, — a concession which might, at first sight, be thought to leave no further difference of opinion possible. What could the most ardent patriot wish for, but that the House should be so constituted, that no sacrifice of personal probity should be required ?

Dr. Paley must, however, be again heard. He contends, that " in political, above all other subjects, the arguments, or rather the conjectures, on each side of a question, are often so equally poised, that the wisest judgments may be held in suspense." These he calls " subjects of indifference." And again, " When the subject is not indifferent in itself, it will appear such to a great part of those to whom it is proposed, for want of information, or reflection, or experience, or capacity to collect and weigh the reasons " on each side. " These cases," he says, and not unreasonably, " compose the province of influence." But then he adds, that " whoever reviews the

operations of government in this country since the Revolution will find few, even of the most questionable measures of administration, about which the best instructed judgment might not have doubted at the time, but of which he may affirm with certainty, that they were indifferent to the greatest part of those who concurred in them."

The whole doctrine of indifference is evidently very suspicious, and, if carried into practice, would, I fear, be found but too soothing and convenient to that numerous description of men who are neither very virtuous nor the contrary, and who, though they may be *induced* to act ill, must first practise upon themselves some arts of apology and self-delusion. Such doctrine of indifference would surely be destructive of all that plain, straight-forward, simple, and intelligible integrity which should never be parted with, — which is the best ornament of the character of every man, in public as in private life, — the best security for his virtue, and even for his wisdom.

But further: *were* in reality the political questions since the Revolution, in general, such as Dr. Paley supposes, — such, that influence might fairly decide them? and *may*, therefore, the same be concluded of almost all political questions? for that is the inference intended, or is at least the practical inference. What are the facts? What says the history? I would recommend this subject to your attention, as I would recommend it when you arrive at similar reasonings urged by Dr. Somerville. Bear it in mind, while you read the annals of this country, from the Revolution to the present moment.

Not to decide at present on reigns which we have not yet considered, can it be true of the reigns before us, — the reigns of William and of Anne? Take, for instance, the latter. Could not men form an opinion, and were they not bound to vote according to that opinion, on the Occasional Conformity Bill, and on the Schism Bill, — that is, on all questions where the toleration of religion was concerned? Again, could they not form an opinion on the question of peace and war, at the opening of the reign? Again, whether the ends of the war had not been sufficiently attained, about the middle of the reign? Again, at the close of the reign, whether the negotiations which led to the peace of Utrecht had been properly conducted? — whether the peace was well made? — whether it should then have been made at all? — whether the Hanover family should have been called to the throne? — whether the Protestant succession was in danger? — whether the union with Scotland should have been attempted? — whether, when once effected, it should afterwards be broken? Are these, and could they ever have been, questions of indifference? What are the questions, agitated in the Parliaments of Anne, which were not connected with the great leading questions of the balance of power in Europe, and the success of the principles of the Revolution? How were men of independence and reflection to avoid form-



ing some opinion, to avoid feeling some strong sentiment, on the one side or the other?

The truth is, that questions where suspense of judgment is allowable, questions of indifference, such as Dr. Paley, inaccurately, as I suspect, dangerously, as I am sure, represents the greatest part of political questions to be, excite, when they occur, no sensation, — none in the public, none in the House; are the mere ordinary and commonplace business of the kingdom; what any minister may, and what every minister does, carry on, and what no minister finds it necessary to carry on by the exertion of influence. It is not by votes on cases like these that a minister is obliged by any member, and is expected, consequently, to oblige that member in his turn; it is on questions where the great system of his administration at home or abroad is concerned, — where the conduct of those he has intrusted, his officers, civil or military, is to be censured or approved, — where public offenders are to be screened, — or where even his own wisdom or integrity is to be questioned: it is on occasions like these that influence is wanted and is exerted; these are the cases that, far more than the cases of indifference, compose the real province of influence. It is impossible to say, that men shall either decide, or avoid deciding, on occasions like these, without implicating in their vote, or in their absence from the House, the character of their personal probity.

The more natural view of this subject seems to be, that, in a mixed and free government like our own, all questions that either occupy or deserve to occupy attention have a reference either to the prerogative of the crown or privileges of the people, to religious toleration, to mild or harsh government, to peace and war, or, finally, to some of the more important subjects of political economy; that suspense in all these cases is impossible; that honest men, therefore, vote with those who best promote such *systems* and *principles* as they approve; that in this manner are disposed of, and ranged on *different* sides, the men of *political integrity*; and that the remainder are those who are in the habit of thinking all questions matters of indifference, and of joining the men or the ministers who are most likely to furnish their relations or themselves with emoluments and offices; but that such men are, and always have been, the proper objects of the suspicion and contempt, not only of the public, but of the very House itself, and it is impossible to suppose that they can be necessary to the stability of any good government, — certainly not in any greater number than the infirmity of human nature will always produce them, after every possible political expedient and contrivance has been resorted to, for the purpose of diminishing their number and weakening their efficiency.

I have now another topic to propose in like manner to your reflections. The reign of Anne is remarkable as exhibiting in a very

strong point of view one of those peculiarities in the constitution of a government which can occur only in a free and mixed form, like our own. I allude to the manner in which the executive power can be restrained, and even controlled, by machinery not *avowedly* provided by the constitution for the purpose, and yet acting with far more certainty and success than any that could be devised by the most skilful contriver of political systems.

For instance, Queen Anne carried on the war against France when neither her wishes nor her opinions were favorable to its continuance. The Whig administration remained in power long after they had become disagreeable to her; and Marlborough was her general, and even the arbiter of her councils at the conferences for peace, when neither he nor his duchess any longer possessed her favor. Louis the Fourteenth, in the mean time, had always understood that it was the acknowledged prerogative of the crown in this country to determine the questions of peace and war; that it was equally so to choose its own ministers; and though he must have known that these prerogatives, however acknowledged by the constitution, were, after all, not exercised in the manner they were done by himself, still he had learned that the Duchess of Marlborough was supplanted, that Harley and Mrs. Masham were the real favorites, — that the Whigs were on the decline, and the Tories preparing for their political triumph; and what difficulties, he must have thought, were left, and what was he now to fear?

All this is made very apparent by a few pages in the Duchess of Marlborough's Apology, describing the situation of things so early as in the winter of 1706 and spring of 1707, about a year after the battle of Ramillies, the great battle which seemed to decide the fortunes of the war. Yet all through the year of 1708, the war, and the great supporters of it, the Whigs, were still highly popular. At the end of this year, 1708, November 25th, a new Parliament met, in which the Whigs had, as before, a decided ascendancy, and they were possessed of a power that was still firm, and as yet not to be shaken. The nation and the houses of Parliament were still in their favor; and though the queen longed for their dismissal almost as impatiently as did her secret counsellors and the rival party of the Tories, it required a certain lapse of time, and a continuance of mistake and infatuation on the part of the Whigs, to produce the great political events which Louis perhaps expected to take place long before, without difficulty or delay. When the Whig administration was at last fairly swept away, the queen was felicitated on her success, and even in express words congratulated as being again a queen.

Instances of this sort of control over the wishes of the sovereign sometimes occur in our history, since the restoration of Charles the Second, and they deserve attention. While the government remains mixed and free, they will never cease at particular periods to occur.



As on these occasions it is always said that the sovereign has assuredly a right to appoint his own ministers, and as this observation is generally considered as decisive, a few remarks may not be entirely without their use to those who would study these, the most critical portions of our annals, and certainly by far the most important peculiarities of our constitution.

To consider them a little. The great problem of government is, to make the executive power sufficiently strong to preserve the peace and order of society, and yet not leave it sufficiently strong to disregard the wishes and happiness of the community. When this point is attained, every thing is attained that the nature of human society admits of. But, referring to our own history, we may say that this was not done in our own country before or during the reign of Elizabeth, nor yet during the reign of Charles the First. A crisis of the most melancholy nature ensued. From this time, however, what had always been more or less the doctrine became at last the practice of the English constitution, and while the executive power was, in the person of the king, considered as incapable of doing any wrong, the ministers of that executive power were considered as its advisers, and therefore very capable of doing wrong, and as the proper and only subjects of national censure or punishment.

It is not easy to discover a more happy expedient than this for solving the great political problem which I have just mentioned; certainly no better has ever appeared in any government that has hitherto existed among mankind. The regular growth and final maturity of this expedient, if I may so speak, among all the changes and chances of the events of our history, may assuredly be esteemed one of the greatest blessings by which this country is distinguished; but the original difficulty is so very great, that it is scarcely possible for human beings entirely to escape it; and it is not escaped, but much the contrary, if it be once considered as a political maxim, that the sovereign can appoint his own ministers, and that no further debate is necessary.

I will now put two cases: one, to show, in the first place, the impropriety of this political maxim, that the king can appoint, and that nothing more is to be said; and another, in the second place, to show the impropriety of any maxim directly the contrary, — that the sovereign, for instance, should always be controlled in this point. Lastly, I will propose a conclusion from the whole.

And first, to show the impropriety of the maxim, that the sovereign can choose his own ministers, and that no further debate is possible. Suppose, for instance, that Queen Anne, during the administration of the Whigs, had satisfied herself that the war ought to be terminated, and yet found her ministers of a different opinion; suppose, in this case, she had dismissed them, and appointed others; suppose that the houses of Parliament were unfavorable, agreeing with her

old ministers, and refusing her new ministers their support, — that she therefore dissolved the Parliament, and appealed to the people. Now, if on this occasion her people had returned her such representatives as were favorable to the new ministers, merely because the queen was vested by the constitution with the prerogative of making peace and of choosing her own ministers, what difference would there in fact have been between her and Louis the Fourteenth? None but this, — that the sovereign in this country had to go through the *ceremony* of dissolving an existing Parliament and calling a new one, and that Louis could follow his own opinion without any such delay. Or to put a still stronger case to the same purpose: suppose Queen Anne had resolved, if possible, to restore her brother and her family to the throne; she had found, we will imagine, her Whig ministers impracticable on this occasion; she had perceived that Bolingbroke and others, on the contrary, would try the experiment, if sure of her support; Bolingbroke, therefore, is made minister; her intentions, and those of her new adviser, become manifest; the houses of Parliament, as before, thwart her measures, and the votes necessary for her purpose cannot be carried; she therefore dissolves the Parliament, and appeals to the people. Now, if in this case also the electors return a House of Commons friendly to the new ministers, merely because those new ministers are the objects of the queen's choice, and because the constitution has given her the power of choice, — if such had been the reasoning considered as final on the occasion, what would have been the result? That the Protestant succession would not have taken place; that the Stuarts would have been recalled; the Revolution failed; and more than this, all these events would have happened contrary to the real opinion and wishes of the community. That is, in other words, this single maxim, if it should really obtain and be acted upon, would at once make the sovereign arbitrary, whenever any personal pique with his ministers, any particular views of his own in politics, or any great projects with respect to the descent of his crown, or to the constitution of the country, inspired him with a wish to become arbitrary, — that is, to do what he thought best.

We will now change entirely the aspect of the reasoning, to show, in the second place, the impropriety of any maxim exactly the contrary to that we have noticed. We will suppose that an appeal, on some account or other, had, as before, been made by the sovereign from the Parliament to the people, and that the maxim in the mind of the electors had no longer been such as we have hitherto supposed, but that the reasoning had been of a nature totally different: for instance, that the legislative bodies, more particularly the House of Commons, were the natural protectors of the community; that the sovereign in a free government was not to do whatever he thought good; that the liberties of the country had always owed their exist-



ence to the control which the Houses had exercised upon the executive power ; that a free constitution in reality meant this, and meant little else ; and that, therefore, the people should *always* support their Parliaments, who could not be expected to bear up against the executive power without the most ready sympathy and protection, without the most implicit confidence on the part of their constituents. Now it is evident, that, if reasonings like these were supposed to be *always decisive*, and to preclude, as in the first cases, *all further discussion*, then the executive power would be a mere cipher, would be always at the mercy of those who, by whatever means, had possessed themselves of the confidence of the Houses. I do not say that even this would be a bad species of government, or, at least, that it would not be the best alternative of the two ; but I may safely say that it is not properly the constitution of England, and that therefore, as before, this must not be the maxim, — namely, that the Houses, or perhaps, as the case may more probably be, that the House of Commons, is at all events to be supported.

Taking, therefore, the difficulties on each side of the question into account, I now proceed, in the third place, to propose a conclusion drawn from the whole, and it is this : that, whenever an appeal is made by the executive power from the House of Commons to the nation by a dissolution, the veil of the constitution is for a time drawn aside ; the personal conduct, the political wisdom, not only of each representative of the public, but even of the high and supreme magistrate of the realm himself, is for one short interval brought before the consideration of the public, and is even subjected to their decision. The most important question that can possibly be proposed is then, in fact, proposed to every individual of intelligence or influence ; for it is this : to which of the two parties (however elevated, in the view of reason and the constitution, one of these high parties may be), — to which of the two parties he is to give his support. And the result of the whole is this : that this support is to be given, not in compliance with any preëstablished maxims either of a monarchical or democratical nature, but after the most careful deliberation on the merits of the precise case before him ; for it is by these merits he is to be decided, and not by any sweeping general preconceptions on the one side or the other, such as preclude at once all further discussion ; he is to be determined, on the contrary, by a deliberation careful, honest, and independent, — a deliberation which is the very virtue and the very office that on this occasion are required from him ; he is to deliberate as having now become for a season the guardian and the arbiter of the British constitution, of the happiness of his country, of the rights and welfare of the existing generation and posterity. According to the issue of his inquiries and meditations, he is bound to return to Parliament those who would be most likely to favor those views of the case which he himself entertains ; and a

greater fault, I had almost said a greater crime, can scarcely be committed, than for any man to suffer himself to be swayed on great occasions like these by any motives of base and detestable self-interest, by any hopes of preferment for himself or his relatives, or even by regard to his family connections, his personal friendships, his obligations of kindness, — or, in short, by any motive, even generous and virtuous, but the sole and proper motive which can alone in this particular instance be generous and virtuous, his real view of the case, the calm, plain, honest, unsophisticated decision of his judgment.

If ever the constitution of England is to be admired, it is on occasions like these. In every crisis of this nature, when the supreme executive power was in fact to be criticized and publicly controlled, at Rome a tribune was to appear on the part of the people with his veto, in Aragon a justiza was to be a sort of representative and guardian of the community. These are but very indifferent expedients; such as have appeared in Grecian or other republican forms of government are little better; in arbitrary governments there are none. But in our own happy country, civil wars, violence and bloodshed, those contests so disgraceful to humanity, so fatal but too often to the interests of the people, are avoided; they have now been so for a century and a half, and all this by the regular and orderly exercise of the different functions that belong to the sovereign, the houses of legislature, and the people. In England, if the great magistrate of the realm is at issue with other powers in the state, the question is for some time kept in suspense; the public attention is excited, and then, before either of the parties is irrecoverably committed or irreconcilably inflamed, the Parliament is dissolved, a third party is called in, and that third party is the nation itself: not acting in any tumultuous or extraordinary manner; not exerting any physical force; not called upon to show any giddy rudeness, any vulgar insolence, any upstart airs of authority over their sovereign, to whom they owe a general obligation of duty and obedience; and, on the contrary, not called upon to show the slightest disrespect or indifference to the office of that part of the legislature, their houses of Parliament, to which they owe a general sentiment of confidence and affection, but called upon gravely and peaceably to furnish a new representative, a new special reporter of their opinion to their sovereign, — one with whom he may again consult, and to whom again propose his own particular views of the nature of his prerogative or of the national interest. If the sovereign should have lent too willing an ear to counsels unfavorable to the constitution or the welfare of his people, he may thus be warned of his mistake in time, by the opinions of the representatives which the people have returned to him, and be warned in a manner the most respectful, the most gentle, the most consistent with the high reverence that is due to his exalted station; and if, on the contrary, the people themselves mistake or betray their own interests, and send



an improper representative, they must suffer, and they deserve to suffer (as men must always do in every concern and situation of human life), the natural consequences of their own servility, inattention, or ignorance.

When the sovereigns of this country have neglected the known sentiments of the people, or have disregarded the answers that have been made by the nation through the medium of their new representatives, in consequence of appeals of this kind, in each case, deplorable have been to them the events that followed. Of the Stuarts, one lost his life, and one his crown, and even Charles the Second precipitated himself and the nation to the very brink of confusion. Yet the people of England appear to have been always, notwithstanding their natural attachment to the House of Commons and their concern for their own liberties, very indulgent critics to their sovereigns. Even Charles the Second, the most worthless of men, obtained an answer from them, on an appeal of this kind, at last, quite favorable to his wishes.

There is considerable difficulty, no doubt, on these occasions ; and as the physical strength is with the nation, and only opinion and the reverence of authority with the sovereign, the balance of the scale is not on light grounds to be made to turn against him.

I will now propose a case to you for your own application of these general reasonings. I will take a particular point of time in the reign before us. Of the various periods in our history, when a sort of crisis of this kind, to a greater or less degree, was understood to exist, I know of none in which a decision would have been made with more difficulty than during these very times which we are now considering. I propose it, therefore, to your reflections, — the epoch of 1710 ; you will find the case to be shortly this : — The queen had long disliked the Whigs and their administration, but they were triumphant in the houses of Parliament, and carried on the business of the nation with great ability and success ; for the first time in the annals of the world, England had rendered herself, by her Continental interference, the leading power in Europe ; the queen was therefore obliged to submit ; she could consult neither the wishes of her secret advisers, Harley and Mrs. Masham, and get clear of her ministers, nor her own views and opinions, and get rid of the war. The Whigs had, however, while they were vindicating the great cause of the nation at the trial of Dr. Sacheverell, unfortunately for themselves, excited in that nation so violent a ferment, and discovered to the queen so plainly the secret of her own strength, that she no longer thought it necessary to keep any terms with them ; she dismissed them from their offices ; ordered a proclamation to be issued for dissolving the Parliament ; and, when the Chancellor Cowper on this occasion rose to speak, declared that she would admit of no debate, “ that such was her pleasure.” Here, then, was an appeal to the public.

Now the question is, What ought to have been the answer returned by the nation? If a Tory House of Commons was returned, a peace would probably be the result, and one of the greatest calamities that can afflict mankind at an end. If, on the contrary, a majority of the Whigs was to be returned, the war would be continued under the auspices of the greatest of commanders, and France probably reduced so low as never again to be in a condition to disturb the tranquillity of Europe. In the one case, a sanction would be given to the arbitrary principles that had been avowed by Dr. Sacheverell and his adherents, and even the queen herself would be encouraged and assisted to patronize and establish them; her attachment to her brother, and to her own house of Stuart, was well known. What might not be the consequence? But if, on the contrary, the Whigs were protected, the principles of the Revolution were protected, the Protestant succession was protected; and the great cause of civil and religious liberty, that had been decided, with a good fortune so signal and unexpected, a few years before, in favor of the nation, would be rescued from its new and most pressing danger, and probably placed on a secure footing to the most distant era. In the first case, the queen was to be gratified; a queen neither tyrannical nor austere in her nature; exemplary in her conduct; and though not of an understanding the most commanding, on that account the more to be trusted with the enjoyment of a political triumph. In the other case, the Whigs would be told, and all public men hereafter, that they might safely endeavour to promote the glory and interests of the nation, even at the risk of thwarting the wishes of their sovereign; that the public might be depended upon; that their favor, if merited, would be a support as effectual as that of the crown; that a minister's self-interest and political virtue were not necessarily at variance with each other.

Such are some of the considerations on which any lover of his country would have had to decide at the time, and on which *we* may also endeavour to decide, now that all the means of forming a judgment are in our possession. Considering the uncertainty of events, the aspect of things at that particular juncture, and the great stake at issue (the success of the Revolution), I think the question extremely difficult. But the nature of the queen's character, her want of political courage, her evident inaptitude to bold and hazardous counsels, might, perhaps, with those who also duly considered the desirableness of a peace, have turned the decision in *her* favor. The decision was so turned; but it is extremely doubtful, if the queen had lived (as Bolingbroke would have been her minister), what might have been at length the consequences.

These allusions will give you some general notion of the political questions that occurred during this period of our annals.

But among the different transactions of a domestic nature that took place in the reign of Anne, I would particularly recommend to your



study the proceedings in the case of Dr. Sacheverell. I recommend them, not on account of any interest that can now belong either to the Doctor or his sermon, — neither of which is in itself deserving of the slightest regard, — but on account of the lively picture that is here exhibited of the times, and above all, of the manner in which the great Revolution of 1688 was explained and defended by the first statesmen of the country about twenty years after the event. And it is in this spirit, and for this purpose, that I would wish the student to read them, — not as a juror who was to decide whether the Doctor was or was not guilty of the charge preferred against him, but as an inquirer into the history of our constitution, as one who is to observe the political principles exhibited on this occasion by the managers of the House of Commons, by Sacheverell's defenders, by the Lords, and by the nation. The trial is ever memorable, because at this trial the Revolution was avowed to be a case of resistance, — resistance justified, indeed, by the necessity of the case, but still resistance.

At the time of the Revolution, it may be remembered that the houses of Parliament, or rather the House of Commons, in their celebrated vote, had rested their justification on somewhat various, and indeed on very inconsistent grounds, — “That King James, having endeavoured to subvert the constitution by breaking the original contract, having violated the fundamental laws, and having withdrawn himself out of the kingdom, had abdicated the government, and that the throne was thereby vacant.” That is, in other words, the Whigs, for the sake of the Tories, stated the Revolution to be a case of *abdication*, and for the sake of themselves, a breach of the original contract, that is, a case of resistance.

But on the present occasion the preamble to the articles exhibited against Dr. Sacheverell begins in this remarkable manner: — “Whereas his late Majesty, King William the Third, then Prince of Orange, did, with an *armed* force, undertake a glorious enterprise for delivering this kingdom from Popery and arbitrary power, and divers subjects of this realm, well affected to their country, joined with and assisted his late Majesty in the said enterprise, and it having pleased Almighty God to crown the same with success, the late happy Revolution did take effect, and was established; and whereas the said glorious enterprise is approved by several acts of Parliament,” &c., &c. And the first article of the impeachment was, that Dr. Sacheverell had maintained, that “to impute resistance to the said Revolution is to cast black and odious colors upon his late Majesty and the said Revolution.”

Now the difference in the tone and language of the Whigs forms the remarkable part of these proceedings, and nothing can be more curious than to observe how the different parties comported themselves, — the Whigs, the Tories, the Church, and the queen, — on

this great occasion, in the presence of the nation, and, in reality, of subsequent ages.

The doctrines of resistance are not doctrines which can find their way into the courts of law of any country, or be the language of the public ordinances of any regular government. These doctrines, therefore, could not be stated by the Whig managers of the impeachment, in the presence of all the constituted dignity and authority of the realm, without the strongest qualifications,—without distinguishing the case of the Revolution from every other ordinary case,—without considering it as a case of the most overpowering necessity,—by necessity, and by that alone, to be either explained or justified.

In our own times, therefore, on the breaking out of the French Revolution, when Mr. Burke had to vindicate his own account of this Revolution of 1688, his own “representation of the spirit of that leading event, and of the true nature and tenure of the government formed in consequence of it,” he immediately appealed to the speeches of the Whig managers on this very occasion; and it was easy for him to show that the Revolution was *then* justified “only upon the necessity of the case, as the only means left for the recovery of that ancient constitution formed by the original contract of the British state, as well as for the future preservation of the same government.”

Now, though I think allowance must be made for the peculiar situation in which the managers in Dr. Sacheverell’s trial stood, and the necessity they were under to qualify to the utmost their doctrines of resistance, still it is sufficient for Mr. Burke, that their doctrines, *unless* so qualified, could not be produced and defended before the lawyers and statesmen of the country,—could not be produced as doctrines worthy to be recognized by, and to be a part of, the constitution of England.

The next question that remains is, What reply was made to the Whig managers by the defenders of Sacheverell? How were the doctrines of resistance, thus stated and limited, received? Were they controverted? Far from it: when *thus* modified, they were at once admitted. And therefore, when thus modified, they may be considered as the constitutional doctrines of the realm.

But the interest of the trial does not cease here; for Dr. Sacheverell, having fortified his own doctrines of passive obedience by the authority of the Church of England and the most able divines and prelates from the time of the Reformation, a very large field of disquisition was opened, and the question was very solemnly considered, whether passive obedience had or had not been the doctrine of the Church of England and of its most able and learned divines.

The grounds to be taken by the reasoners on the Tory side were obvious: quotations were to be produced from the proper authorities, to show that the doctrines of passive obedience had been laid down, and without any exception; that such had been the ordinary practice



of our divines, and that the Doctor only followed their example. This was done.

But the Whig prelates and lawyers contended, that rules of duty, like those of civil obedience, could be taught only by the Scriptures (and therefore by the Church and its divines) in *general terms*, — and that exceptions in extreme cases, like those of the Revolution, were necessarily *implied* from the very nature and common reason of the case.

And what was *now* the ground taken by the Doctor's counsel? The *propriety* of this reasoning, and of this view of the case, was admitted by the Doctor's counsel. Now, as this solution of the difficulty, however reasonable, and however *acted* upon by the divines of the Church of England themselves, had never before been publicly *stated* and *admitted*, as the proper *theory* on the subject, some *advance* must be considered as having been made on this occasion (and one favorable to the general principles of civil liberty), and in a quarter where of all others it is most desirable to find it.

There was another very important topic started on this memorable occasion. The Doctor was accused of maintaining, that the toleration granted by law was unreasonable, and its allowance unwarrantable. This led to an assertion of the doctrine of toleration by the Whig managers. The defence of the Doctor's counsel, the very able Sir Simon Harcourt and others, was such an admission of the principle in *theory*, and such a mere quibbling and special pleading with respect to the point of fact, that the general doctrine of toleration must be considered as having become, on this occasion, like the qualified doctrine of resistance, the regular and constitutional doctrine of the land.

I have mentioned these particulars from a hope of inducing my hearers to believe that this trial will afford them abundant matter for amusement and instruction, even though the particular question of the Doctor's criminality be or be not considered. The circumstance, also, which I have just adverted to, of the reference made by the great political moralist of our own times, Mr. Burke, to this very trial, in one of his celebrated productions, and that at the distance of a century, may serve, I think, to remind you of the importance of history and of historical documents, and the necessity there is that those who would wish to be statesmen should in the first place be conversant with the occurrences that have taken place in our own country, the reasonings to which they have given rise, the principles which they seem to have established.

The speeches, as they are reported in the trial, appear probably in a much more concise and condensed form than that in which they were delivered, and though they have thus gained something in manliness and strength, they have no doubt lost much in eloquence and grace; yet they are, on the whole, very creditable to the talents of the speakers, particularly the reply of Sir Joseph Jekyll.

I must make one observation more, to recommend these remarkable proceedings to your examination. The great characteristic distinction of this period of our history is the Revolution, is the interest our ancestors took in it, the manner in which it was understood, the chances of its success or failure. And the Revolution is still the great characteristic feature of our constitution and government. It must ever remain so. And when the inhabitants of this country are indifferent to the subject, they will probably soon arrive at a state of permanent political degradation, — sooner or later, at a total loss of those honorable English feelings, that love of freedom, and that jealousy of power, by which they were before so happily distinguished.

But to conclude the subject. From this celebrated impeachment of Sacheverell two good effects followed: first, that there now exists upon record a full assertion of the great principles of civil and religious liberty, made in the presence of all the authority, dignity, and wisdom of the realm, and, to every practical purpose, an admission and acknowledgment; secondly, that, though the impeachment in this important respect answered the purposes of the Whigs, as patriots and lovers of the constitution of their country, and as far as posterity was concerned, it by no means answered their purposes as leaders of a party. The Doctor became the object of the most ridiculous idolatry, and they themselves and their politics were precipitated to their decline and fall. This impeachment, therefore, became in this manner an example, which never has nor can be forgotten, to show the risk that is always run, of exalting into importance an author and his writings by public prosecutions, — of giving fame and popularity to the one, and circulation and influence to the other.

Now this effect thus produced is a good effect; for the restraint that ministers and attorney-generals are thus laid under, on the mere point of prudence and *policy*, operates most favorably for the liberty of the press. That liberty would be soon destroyed, and entirely at an end, if every writing or pamphlet that must necessarily appear a libel in a court of law were to be instantly seized upon, and dragged to judgment, by those who are bound from their office to defend the established order of the community. Such men are always tempted, from their situation, however amiable they may individually be, to urge the rights and extend the limits of authority too far. It is very happy, that, from the experience of this and other similar prosecutions, the wisdom of leaving publications, *if possible*, unnoticed has become a sort of maxim which is seldom departed from, but by petulant, narrow-minded men, — men who are mere lawyers, and who, it is to be hoped, on such occasions, mean well, for this is the only merit they can plead.

But, in the next place, the scenes that ensued during and after the impeachment are mortifying, but instructive lessons, to show the nature of what is called a *popular* cry; more especially when the in-



terests of religion can be made to form a part of it. The great mass of the nation, always right in their sentiments, but not so in their *opinions*, — never, when the slightest patience or precision is necessary, — meant, no doubt, when they were patronizing Dr. Sacheverell, to support the Church and the monarchy, and so indeed they everywhere declared, with the most persevering vociferations; and for this purpose they made bonfires and addresses, plundered the residences and pulled down the meeting-houses of the Dissenters: but, instead of supporting all this time the Church and the monarchy, it is but too plain that they were only endeavouring, however unintentionally, to vilify and destroy those sacred principles of civil and religious liberty without which the Church would scarcely deserve the attribute of Christianity, or the monarchy, of government.

A few years afterwards, Dr. Fleetwood, the more enlightened and civilized Sacheverell of the Whigs, published four sermons, and prefixed a sort of political dissertation. “I have never failed,” said this divine, “on proper occasions, to recommend, urge, and insist upon the loving, honoring, and the reverencing the prince’s person, and holding it, according to the laws, inviolable and sacred, and paying all obedience and submission to the laws, though never so hard and inconvenient to private people; yet did I never think myself at liberty, or authorized, to tell the people, that either Christ, St. Peter, or St. Paul, or any other holy writer, had, by any doctrine delivered by them, subverted the laws and constitutions of the country in which they lived, or put them in a worse condition, with respect to their civil liberties, than they would have been, had they not been Christians.”

Of the different constitutional questions that arose in this reign, the next that I shall select, as fit more particularly to engage your attention, is that of the Protestant succession.

On this subject of the Protestant succession, there is a very curious essay in Hume. You will see a reference to and some account of it in the Note-book on the table. Somerville has given a dissertation upon it at the end of his History, which seems reasonable and satisfactory. His conclusion is this: “That there was no plan concerted or agreed to by the Tory ministers *collectively*, in the last years of the queen, for defeating the Protestant settlement.”

It was, however, most happy for the civil and religious liberties of England, that the opinions of the majority of the nation were, on the whole, at the time, sound, and particularly on the question of Protestantism. No Tory minister could, therefore, depend upon the popularity of any measure in favor of the Stuarts; and could still less depend upon the favor and assistance of the queen, who, very fortunately, (though she loved her brother, and wished the restoration of her house,) had no taste for political enterprise, and was most sincerely attached to the Protestant faith.

After all, the queen died most opportunely. The cause of the Revolution was of such importance to England, I had almost said to human nature, that it is not possible to survey these very critical times without something of anxiety, approaching to a sort of terror; certainly not without being struck with that remarkable good fortune which has so often distinguished this country with respect to its civil and religious liberties.

In appreciating the danger to which the Revolution and the Protestant succession were exposed, we naturally think of the intrigues of the exiled family, and of the court of St. Germain. We turn, therefore, to the second volume of Macpherson's Original Papers; but though they must be looked at, and though they occasionally present matter of importance, on the whole they disappoint expectation. There is so much that appears difficult to understand, and so much that appears not worth understanding, that a reader labors on with renewed disappointment and continued weariness.\*

Again, the proceedings that belong to the great case of Ashby and White are, I think, another subject which may deserve your observation. They are very well worth reading, particularly the debate in the Commons: the case was very ably argued, and the speeches are well given. All the proceedings, and, above all, the final representation and address of the Lords to the queen, should be perused. The first question was, whether Ashby could bring an action *in the courts of law* against the returning officer, for refusing his vote at an election; the House of Commons contended that all such questions were cognizable only by themselves; — and the second, whether the House of Commons could commit to prison, as they had done, those persons who violated what they had themselves declared to be the privileges of their house. Some of the first lawyers and statesmen that our country has produced were actively engaged in these transactions. The questions were curious and important, and the discussions that took place lead the thoughts of the reader through such a variety of particulars connected with the laws and constitution of our country, that I cannot but recommend them to your perusal. The dispute between the two Houses grew so violent and irremediable, that the queen, after intimating that she agreed (and very properly) with the Lords, thought it best to prorogue, and soon after to dissolve, the Parliament.

Again, the proceedings on the Bill for Preventing Occasional Conformity should be noted. They are connected with the progress of

\* But we may now look at the Life of James the Second, lately published; and the Stuart papers, now at Carlton House, would, no doubt, exhibit sufficient light on this subject, if any more were necessary. They consist of an immense assemblage of letters, which Sir J. Macpherson and others are, or have been, arranging. With respect to this life and these letters, every praise is due to George the Fourth for his activity in procuring them, and his disposition to make them known to the public. They very amply show (particularly the letters, as I understand) the dangers we escaped.



our religious liberties, exemplifying completely the different language that will be held, the different reasonings that will be adopted, by those who are satisfied to leave mankind, as much as they possibly can, at liberty and at rest, upon points of religious difference, and those who are very improperly desirous to exalt such discussions into questions of paramount importance, — refreshing and reviving them on all occasions, and keeping the contending sects apart from each other, known by their proper badges and colors, and prevented from that gradual conciliation and calmness, on former subjects of religious animosity, which it is the natural and most salutary effect of time and of the business of human life, amid the prosperity and improvement of society, insensibly to produce. As such, these proceedings, on both occasions, (for the question was twice agitated,) are very instructive. The Lords, and Bishop Burnet, that is, the Whigs, take what I presume to call the part of toleration and good sense; and the Commons, and Sir John Packington, that is, the Tories, assert the cause, as they supposed, of all true religion and all sound policy.

In the next Parliament, which was a Whig Parliament, and met in October, 1705, we find, and cannot be surprised to find, a regular and solemn debate in the Lords on the subject of the danger of the Church. The debate, and the proclamation that followed against the authors and spreaders of any such seditious and scandalous report as the danger of the Church, are characteristic of the age, and, in some respects, of human nature in every age. There is nothing so valuable, and therefore nothing about which men can be so easily alarmed, as religion. Fear, from its very nature, is deaf to every argument and blind to every fact. There is no situation, therefore, in which good men so readily deceive themselves, and designing men so easily deceive others, as in any case of possible alarm on the subject of religion and the safety of a religious establishment.

This imperfect description of the reign of Anne may serve, I hope, to give you some general notion of this period of our history, of the subjects of reflection you are to meet with, and the books you may consult. The whole of the reign, I confess, appears to me interesting and important: interesting, because it is connected with our literature and our classical writers, Swift, Addison, and Bolingbroke; because many questions occurred intimately connected with our civil and religious liberties; because it is illustrated with the victories of Marlborough; because it is animated by the contentions of two great parties, whose principles and feelings can still be comprehended by ourselves, and are, in many respects, not at all different from our own. It is important, because the prevalence of France in the politics of Europe was the question at issue abroad, and the success of the Revolution the question in suspense at home; no greater could well occur. We see, unhappily, in our own times, what has been the result of the ascendancy of that military nation; and if the queen had

found means to restore her family to the throne, and if the Revolution had failed, the world had been deprived of one salutary example, almost the only one, the example of a great national effort, the Revolution of 1688, made, and successfully made, in resistance to arbitrary power, in defence of civil and religious liberty, — and been deprived, too, of the no less salutary example of a nation happy and prosperous for a whole century, to a degree beyond all precedent in the history of mankind; and this, not on account of any particular indulgence of nature to its soil or climate, but chiefly on account of the constitution of its government, — chiefly because, while the executive power was sufficiently strong, the people were not without their due share in the legislature, and neither the monarch nor the aristocracy was armed with any powers inconsistent with the honest industry and virtuous independence of the lower orders.

I must observe, while I am concluding, that it will require more than ordinary attention to understand the interior politics of this reign. The Whig and Tory parties, though at a great distance from each other at their extreme points, were almost connected with each other by intermediate trimmers and shufflers of every description. Men of very discordant principles were often mixed up in the same cabinet. The queen was a decided Tory, and was always anxious to collect, or retain, as many Tories around her as possible. Marlborough and Godolphin were originally Tories, but were obliged gradually to depend more and more on the Whigs, from the nature of the contest in which they were engaged. Harley and Bolingbroke were at first the friends of Marlborough, and employed by him. On one account or another, it is impossible for you to understand the reign, unless you, in the first place, note down the different Tory and Whig Parliaments, the different struggles between the queen and her ministers, and compare them with the measures of government at home, and the negotiations for peace and the military movements abroad. You will not do this so readily as you may suppose, and till it is done, a great air of confusion will hang over the whole scene.

Since I wrote this lecture, the *Life of the Duke of Marlborough* has been published by Mr. Coxe, and what I have just recommended as a necessary labor of some toil and difficulty is become comparatively easy and agreeable. The movements of the Whig leaders are not yet, as I conceive, properly explained; they will probably be made more intelligible by the expected *History of Sir James Mackintosh*; but in the mean time, and indeed at all times, it will be impossible to appreciate the politics of the reign of Anne, without the study of this very welcome, entertaining, and valuable work of Mr. Coxe.



## LECTURE XXV.

## ANNE.—UNION OF ENGLAND AND SCOTLAND.

THE great domestic event by which the reign of Anne was distinguished was the union of the two kingdoms of England and Scotland. I am very desirous to recommend this subject to your diligence and reflection. I will make a few observations, and endeavour to convey to you some general idea of the interest which belongs to it.

England has been connected with Scotland, with Ireland, with America. In each of these relations a sort of termination and crisis has at last taken place. In Scotland we adopted the measure of a union under the immediate apprehension of a rebellion; in Ireland, after a rebellion which had but too nearly torn the two countries asunder; in America the rebellion was successful, and we lost the country for ever. We have still another country with which we are connected on the other side of the globe, the immense continent of India.

The political questions that arise from the connection of nations with each other seem to me among the greatest that history or that human affairs can ever present to you. Such connections of different nations have often occurred, and will never cease to occur, in the annals of mankind. Spain has been connected with Portugal; both kingdoms with South America; France with America and the West Indies; the house of Austria with the Netherlands and Italy. By proximity of situation, or by colonization, kingdoms have been, and always will be, vitally dependent on the conduct of each other. The duties that hence arise are often very difficult, the best systems of policy not obvious. Happy would it have been and would it still be for mankind, if something more of good sense and good feeling either had been or could yet be introduced into the cabinets of their rulers, and into their own misguided understandings and selfish minds!

It is very true, that, when philosophy has exhibited all its reasonings and exhausted all its efforts, it is very true, that the most serious difficulties will still remain on subjects like these, — that the interests of connected nations cannot be entirely reconciled, nor their separate wishes be gratified. Nations must often be reduced to compound with evils, and at last to make such sacrifices as are necessarily accompanied with mortification and regret; but it is for political wisdom to encounter and reconcile men to these evils, to proclaim aloud, that on these occasions nothing has happened at variance with the common necessities of our imperfect state.

The misfortune is, that nations can never submit to the circum-

stances of their situation in time, or with any grace or good humor. Human life, however, at every turn, and in every stage of it, is continually requiring from us a wisdom of this melancholy cast. It is the great discipline to which the Almighty Ruler of the world has subjected us, through all the successive changes of our state, and all the affecting relations of our domestic feelings, from infancy to the grave. On all such occasions, on the small scale of our social connections, and in what relates to ourselves, we submit to necessity; we compound, we balance, we understand what is our best wisdom, and we endeavour to practise it; the father expects not that his son shall for ever remain dependent on his kindness and moulded by his directions; men with their inferiors, neighbours with each other, act always on a system of mutual sacrifices, reciprocal duties, and interchanged offices of sympathy and good-will.

But on the larger scale of the intercourse of nations, particularly of connected nations, the same moral truths, though equally existing, are not so obvious, and, when apparent, not so impressive. We are, therefore, fretful, ill-humored, outrageous; we contend against reason, philosophy, and nature itself; forget the great rule of doing to others as we would they should do unto us; and after wasting our blood and treasure to no purpose, we at last sit down faint and exhausted, abandon our vain projects only because it is impossible to pursue them, and then leave it to the reasoners of a succeeding age to show how egregious has been our folly, and how blind our fury.

The leading principles that belong to subjects of this nature have been introduced to the notice and to the assent of the more intelligent part of mankind in two different modes, — by experience, and by the reasonings of philosophers.

When nations are connected with each other, they can find causes of offence and hostility in three different points, — in their religion, their laws and customs, their trade and manufactures.

Now experience has tolerably well taught mankind, however slowly, that, with respect to the two former, toleration is the best and only policy; that it is best to suffer colonies or inferior nations to retain their own particular creeds and rites and ceremonies in religion, and their own particular modes of administering justice in civil or criminal matters; that improvements may be proposed to them, but not enforced; that, till they can be properly enlightened, they must be left to indulge their own particular notions.

But on the last question, of trade and manufactures, the world is indebted entirely to the labors of the French writers on political economy, and to the works of Hume and Adam Smith. It is from these last two distinguished masters of political science, that this country, more particularly, has acquired any enlarged views which it possesses on such extensive and difficult subjects; and an acquaintance



with their doctrines is indispensably necessary, before we can approach any such questions as the union of kingdoms or the management of colonies.

To illustrate this part of my subject: a reader of history will see all the statesmen of Europe, from the first period of the existence of statesmen, proceed upon the supposition that nations could be enriched only by what is called the balance of trade; that is, if England has sent to Portugal a greater value of manufactures than she received of wine, that Portugal must pay the difference in bullion, and that this bullion was the measure of the advantage which England derived from this trade. Mr. Hume has an essay on the Balance of Trade, and another on the Jealousy of Trade; and after successfully combating the natural reasonings of mankind on these subjects, he concludes thus: — “I shall, therefore, *venture* to acknowledge, that, not only as a man, but as a British subject, I pray for the flourishing commerce of Germany, Spain, Italy, and even France itself. I am at least certain that Great Britain and all those nations would flourish more, did their sovereigns and ministers adopt such enlarged and benevolent sentiments towards each other.”

Now it is to be observed, that no reasoner would at this time of day think it necessary to say that he would “*venture* to acknowledge” the labors of Hume and Smith have been so far successful; and he would not “*venture* to acknowledge,” but he would affirm without hesitation. It is now admitted that the whole doctrine of the balance of trade is a mistake, and that nations are necessarily benefited by any commercial intercourse, of whatever kind, provided it is not artificially produced by the mere operation of laws or any species of extraneous necessity and force.

We have now, then, an adjustment of the whole of the case. What difficulty, it might be said, can remain? If nations are to be connected together, let the one allow to the other its own religion, its own laws, and the most free and unrestrained imports and exports; what cause of contention can remain? Let the supreme legislature be the same; and the countries being thus in every respect identified, the interests of both will be entirely served and secured, and every thing that philosophy can prescribe, or human affairs admit of, be at once accomplished.

But the conduct and even the reasonings of mankind have on all such occasions been widely different, and the result has been at all times fatal to their happiness.

We will take the simplest case, that of a mother country and her colonies. The religion has been here generally the same, and laws and customs similar; in these points there was little room for mistakes. But in questions of trade and commerce greater opportunity for errors was afforded, and the mistakes committed have in fact been very numerous and important. The most narrow jeal-

ousy, the most blighting systems of superintendence and control, have been continually exercised ; no market allowed to the colonies till the supposed interests of the mother country were first secured ; no manufactures to be imported, or even to be used, but those that came from the land and labor of the parent state ; and if ill-humor in the colonies was the consequence, troops were to be sent, and a policy, ultimately injurious to both countries, was to be supported by force.

In other cases that have occurred, cases of connected nations, as the real difficulties have been greater, the mistakes have been still more multiplied and fatal. For instance, two nations may be completely connected together by proximity of situation, and yet be, by fortune, placed under different governments, — England and Scotland, for instance ; each kingdom possessing an independent sovereignty, and therefore each strongly affected by all those associations of national dignity and ancient renown which are so immediately derived from the noblest and best feelings of our nature. This is the most difficult case of all. Nations thus situated are of all others the most unfortunately situated, particularly the inferior nation ; and what a reasoner would even now, at the present day, propose would, in a case like this, be accompanied with the most intolerable difficulties, — difficulties such as the worst passions and the best passions of our nature would equally conspire to render almost insurmountable.

In the first place, nations so situated will be in a state of eternal hostility with each other, — not only of hostility, but of petty warfare ; and not only will they have their own quarrels to adjust, but the inferior state will attach itself to some third state for the benefit of its assistance, and thus become the tool of the one and the victim of the other.

For evils like these the first remedy that might be attempted would be a federal union ; that is, each country to retain its own legislature, but both to have the same king or executive power. This sort of federal union took place by the union of the two crowns of England and Scotland under our James the First. The same was in later years understood to be the situation of England and Ireland, but admitted by our government only at a very late period.

Now this alteration, this federal union, will be on the whole beneficial, but not a remedy. In the first place, the two legislatures may disagree, and it will always be, therefore, the labor of the superior or more powerful country to influence by bribes the legislature of the inferior, to render all such disagreement impossible ; and this will be the source of eternal indignation to all the intelligent and independent men of the state that is thus corrupted and ruled. Again, the inferior country (meaning by superior and inferior the more or less powerful) will appear to itself of less consequence than it was before. It will see its nobles and its aristocracy move away to the seat of



government, its rents follow them; its agriculture and manufactures will seem deprived of their natural encouragement and protection; dissatisfaction, jealousy, hatred, will be deeply felt; and as the inferior country will always compare itself with its more fortunate neighbour, such unhappy effects can never cease. In the mean time the superior country will exercise no arts of conciliation, and adopt no measures of general policy. It will draw a fence around its own trade and manufactures; admit the inferior state to no markets, no colonies, no sources of affluence, which are within its own influence; neglect the laws of the inferior state, corrupt its statesmen, perhaps interfere with its religion, and, in short, exhibit an abuse of power in every possible mode and direction.

Of this situation of things the natural crisis is either a sort of civil war and a total rupture, or the application of a new remedy, the measure of an incorporating union. This last would have been always the best expedient, but it would not have appeared so to those concerned. The superior state would have conceived that it was thus called upon to give away its affluence, and injure the sources of its own prosperity; the inferior, that it was to lose its sovereignty, independence, and dignity, — see its nobles and aristocracy resort to the capital, — and feel most of the evils which have been already mentioned, as inseparable from a federal union, without any adequate return. A century would probably elapse before time had produced its happy effects on both kingdoms, and, depriving the one of its insolence, and the other of its unreasonableness, put each into possession of all the benefits which nature, from their different soil and climate, evidently intended for both.

Of principles like these, and of situations like these, we see a full exemplification, as I have already intimated, in the relative history of Scotland and England. Nothing can be more afflicting than the evils of the first situation, that of entire *independence* of each other. Tyranny, injustice, lawless ambition in the superior state, as in the instance of our Edward the First, on a large scale; on a smaller, devastations, cruelties, unceasing alarm, malignity, and revenge, as in the instances of the border laws and the border wars. Nothing can be more dreadful than both these consequences, particularly the latter, the border wars. Never, sure, was the art by which poetry is distinguished, the art of withdrawing the repulsive and presenting the attractive parts of a picture, displayed in a manner so striking as in reconciling to our imagination, as the great minstrel of the North has done, the marauders and moss-troopers, the inroads and outrages of these unhappy times.

These evils of eternal warfare and ferocious depredation could not but be deplored, even by our fierce ancestors, at the time; and through the whole history of England and Scotland there seems to have been a series of negotiations, with an intent, if possible, to ter-

minate such calamities by a union of the two crowns. The marriage of the two royal families was frequently proposed ; sometimes the union of the two kingdoms. But, after all, the union of the crowns took place not till the reign of our James the First, a late period ; and the union of the kingdoms not till the reign of Queen Anne. It was then accomplished only by force and fraud ; so incurable are the bad passions, so impracticable are sometimes the good passions, of our nature ; so perverse are the selfish interests and temporary reasonings of mankind.

Having proposed these general principles to your consideration, I must now endeavour to draw your attention to the more particular circumstances that attended the Union.

There was a book published by De Foe ; it has been lately republished, and a life of the author prefixed. The name of De Foe is already familiar and even dear to us, though not on account of his book on the Union, but of a work that to the writer himself might, perhaps, have appeared at the time of far less splendor and importance, the romance of Robinson Crusoe. We turn, therefore, in the first place, to the Life of De Foe, prefixed to his work, with no little impatience and curiosity ; not, indeed, thinking of the Union so much as of our early acquaintances, the shipwrecked mariner and his man Friday. But we must be content to hear of the politics and pamphlets in which De Foe was engaged, and to learn nothing of what is far more interesting to us, nothing of the original materials and composition of that attractive production which has given to its author immortality, and to the hours of our childhood those sensations of eager interest and innocent delight which may even now be remembered with envy and regret. In the book of De Foe, the life given of him should, however, be read ; and there is a preface, which should also be looked over. There is a general history, too, of the unions that were at different times attempted prior to the reign of Anne ; and this part of the work is very illustrative of the remarks that have been made.

The point more particularly to be adverted to is the union that was attempted, in 1604, by our James the First ; a monarch whom, it must be confessed, we are not much in the habit of respecting, but who, on this occasion, almost realized his own amusing pretensions, and displayed a decisive superiority over his Parliament and his people in the mysteries of his state-craft, as he called it, or in a knowledge of their best political interests and ultimate happiness.

But this part of the subject (and for the general purposes of instruction it is an important one) is executed in far the most complete manner by Mr. Bruce, who, when the question of a union with Ireland came under the consideration of his Majesty's ministers, was employed by the late Duke of Portland to make a report on the union of England and Scotland. In this work, which is worth reading, there is not only a review of the leading facts in the histories of



the two countries which led to the union of the two crowns, but a review of the union that was really proposed by James the First, with the reasonings in England and Scotland on the subject, and the causes of the failure of the measure. We have a speech of the great Bacon on the subject, and another by James, which are in the second volume, — the volume containing those documents on which the first is founded.

I must also refer you back to the debates which are given in the first volume of Cobbett. You have here not only Bacon's speech, but an account of the objections insisted upon by some of the members of the Commons; and there are here given three speeches by the king, — one to introduce the union, another to hasten it, a third to explain the former, — all of which are perfectly worth reading, and will appear (to those who make due allowances) highly creditable, not only to the disposition of the king, but to his powers of mind. The speeches alluded to, particularly Lord Bacon's, are deserving of attention, not only on account of their subject, but as illustrative of the state of the human mind and of the reasonings of the orators and statesmen of this period, — their distinctness, gravity, and classical learning, — their heavy manner, strange and pedantic perplexities, and weighty matter.

But the nations concerned in these discussions were at a wide distance; the English, more particularly, were jealous, illiberal, and unreasonable, and it is to them, rather than to the Scotch, that the failure of the project is to be imputed.

Cromwell and his officers, more accustomed to dispose of difficulties, soon despatched the business of a union by a few words in an ordinance, giving thirty members to Scotland, as its part of the general representation, enacting a free intercourse of goods, and abolishing all vassalage and superiorities. This ordinance, short and expeditious as it may be, is very creditable to its authors, for the important points are seized upon, and the last regulation respecting vassalage and superiorities might have been copied with great advantage in the time of Anne, while, on the contrary, these national evils were confirmed.

But this sort of union of the two kingdoms was, of course, dissolved when the dynasty of Cromwell was swept away. A very laudable attempt was made in the time of Charles the Second, but the circumstances of the times were very unfavorable, and neither the English were sufficiently disposed to share their trade, nor the Scots to obliterate a part of their Parliament. The measure was repeatedly recommended to the Houses by Charles, and commissioners were appointed, conferences held, proposals interchanged and discussed, but nothing effectual could be accomplished.

William was well disposed, both from the elevation of his temperament and the sagacity of his understanding, to make every effort to heal the divisions and consolidate the strength of the island. De Foe

relates, that his Majesty told him, "he had done all he could in that affair, but that he did not see a temper in either nation that looked like it"; and then added, after some discourse, "that it might be done, but not yet."

William was continually engrossed by the political situation of Europe, which required his time and presence, not only in the cabinet, but the field; and when any abatement is to be made from the character of this illustrious prince, it is in the government of Scotland that the exceptionable part of his conduct is to be found. William was guilty, on some account or other, of the common fault of those who have to manage a connected country, — the fault of confiding in statesmen who know, as it is thought, the nature of the country, and how to transact its business, but who know not a far more important mystery, — the art and the value of mild government. William himself was, unfortunately, too much occupied to teach it to them, or rather to find ministers of another school. The result was, that the differences between the two countries, under his reign, were rather increased than diminished.

There is a chapter in De Foe descriptive of the state of public affairs in both kingdoms, and explanatory of the circumstances that at length made a union not only desirable, but necessary; it is not long, and should be read. In Mr. Bruce's work there is an account of the revival of the plan of union during the reign of William, and again in the first years of Anne, with the events and circumstances that prevented its adoption for some time; this part of the work is very deserving of attention. But neither of these works will give the reader a sufficient idea of the crisis that had at length taken place. This crisis had been occasioned partly by harsh, bad government on the part of England, and partly by the difficulties and evils which were inseparable from the very situation of the two countries. As this is one of the most instructive parts of the whole subject, I must call your attention to it very particularly.

A good general idea may be formed of this crisis from the History of Belsham, but Laing must also be looked at, so also must the appendix to Cobbett's Debates; for Fletcher of Saltoun is a most important character at this particular period, and his speeches and motions in the Scotch Parliament may be seen in this appendix to Cobbett more readily than in his works, or in the authorities from which the appendix is taken, books that may not always be met with.

I have hitherto forbore to mention the History of Somerville only that I might at last mention it as a regular and full statement of the whole subject, which must be read, and that more than once, as quite necessary to the full comprehension of it.

The books I have mentioned, De Foe, Bruce, Belsham, Laing, the appendix to Cobbett, and Somerville, will be sufficient, taken together, but none of them singly; each writer, as is often the case,



doing more justice to some parts of the subject than is done by his fellow-laborers, and no part of the subject being without its curiosity and instruction.

The crisis I have just alluded to was this; you must observe it:—The crown of England, on the demise of Anne, was to be transferred from the Stuart to the Protestant line; but as Scotland was not exactly obliged to adopt the views of England, and was competent to dispose of her own crown in whatever manner she thought best, the present was the moment, in the apprehensions of Fletcher and the Scotch patriots, for some decisive effort to be made in favor of their country,—the moment when an opportunity was offered to assert their rights, and either to be independent, and have a king of their own, or to make such provisions for its commercial interests, and such alterations in its constitution, that, even if the king were the same, its counsels should no longer be guided by the English ministry, and Scotland be no longer neglected, as they thought, insulted, and sacrificed on every occasion to her more powerful neighbour.

It is the struggles of men acting with views like these, and in times like these, that form the most interesting and instructive portion of this subject of the Union. These, however, are not to be found in De Foe, nor in the work of Mr. Bruce, nor sufficiently in Belsham, nor even in Laing; but they may be seen in the appendix to Cobbett's Debates, where the speeches and motions of Fletcher of Saltoun may be easily found.

It is quite necessary that you should form some notion of Fletcher of Saltoun, the complexion of his mind, the nature of his views, the description of his eloquence. Men like Fletcher of Saltoun, the same in kind, though different in degree, are always existing in society; they are always to be found armed with more or less ability and influence in every inferior country; criticizing the conduct of the superior country; explaining, discussing, and aggravating its oppressions; brooding over the wrongs and insults of their native land, and warmed and exasperated to madness by a comparison of the advantages and disadvantages of the two kingdoms,—the wretchedness and poverty of the country they love, and the affluence and happiness of the country they hate; ready, therefore, to propose or adopt any system of policy or line of conduct, if it seem, however slightly, to remove from their eyes that odious dependency which they consider as the obvious cause of all the evils they deplore. Men of this character should be studied by statesmen; but statesmen and men in authority are very apt entirely to neglect and even despise them and their efforts, and very often to confound them with others, daring and bad men, who have all their faults, but who have not their virtues,—others with whom they are frequently associated, and into whose company and even friendship they are but too easily hurried by their own enthusiasm, and still more often driven by the violent measures

and insulting menaces of the rulers of the superior country. The nature of every thing human is so mixed and blended, the good with the evil, that we are not to be surprised, if we should find, that it is to men of this description, to men of these ardent and irregular minds, that society has been indebted, imperfect as are their characters, and doubtful and dangerous and calamitous as are very often their projects, for many of its favorable changes. There is a certain impracticableness in their temperaments, and superficial dogmatism in their understandings, with a certain fearlessness as well as generosity in their dispositions, by which they may be known; but, with all their faults, they would not be, perhaps, ill described by the expressions of the poet, while giving, not only a character, but, as he conceived, a most honorable character, of the English nation: —

"Stern o'er each bosom Reason holds her state,  
With daring aims irregularly great;  
Pride in their port, defiance in their eye,  
I see the lords of human kind pass by,  
Intent on high designs, a thoughtful band,  
By forms unfashioned, fresh from Nature's hand,  
Fierce in their native hardness of soul,  
True to imagined right, above control."

Such was the celebrated Fletcher of Saltoun. And as his country was the inferior country, as England had conducted herself with the usual harshness, ignorance, and illiberality of the superior country, and as the times in which he lived happened to be of a critical nature, his powers were called forth, his heart was animated, and his genius was kindled. He became the hope, the pride, and the director of a small, but popular party; and regarding neither England nor France, nor the Protestant succession nor the succession of the house of Stuart, but in relation to the interests of Scotland, it was to that Scotland, his poor, oppressed, unfortunate native country to its prosperity, happiness, and glory, that he dedicated every passion of his soul and every faculty of his being.

Among the patriots must be mentioned Lord Belhaven, whose speeches contain much more of what is properly denominated eloquence than those of Fletcher, and who would, in the eyes of posterity, have eclipsed even Fletcher himself, if his patriotism had been as pure and unsuspected. This was, however, not the case. He was understood at the time to have been piqued by the court of England, and was believed to have held correspondence with the exiled family of the Stuarts.

Fletcher and the patriots had no sooner perceived that the court of England had an object which must at all events be accomplished, — the proper adjustment of the succession to the crown, that the king of the two countries might be the same, — than they instantly set about forming provisions for the interests of Scotland, and they proposed what they called an Act of Security. From the clauses,



Nos. 1, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 12, (I will read them immediately,) which you will find in Cobbett's appendix, vol. vi., it will be readily seen that this intended act was of no ordinary nature. It is sufficiently descriptive of the crisis I have spoken of. It was meant, and it was, indeed, avowed by Fletcher in his speeches to be meant, to effect the following consequences (see col. xxviii., Appendix to Cobbett): — "They are not limitations," said Fletcher, "upon any prince who shall only be king of Scotland, nor do any way tend to separate us from England; but calculated merely to this end, that, so long as we continue to be under the same prince with our neighbour nation, we may be free from the influence of English Councils and ministers; that the nation may not be impoverished by an expensive attendance at court; and that the force and exercise of our government may be, as far as is possible, within ourselves by which means, trade, manufactures, and husbandry will flourish, and the affairs of the nation be no longer neglected, as they have been hitherto. These are the ends to which all the limitations are directed, that English Councils may not hinder the acts of our Parliaments from receiving the royal assent; that we may not be engaged without our consent in the quarrels they may have with other nations; that they may not obstruct the meeting of our Parliaments, nor interrupt their sitting; that we may not stand in need of posting to London for places and pensions, by which, whatever particular men may get, the nation must always be a loser, nor apply for the remedies of our grievances to a court where, for the most part, none are to be had. On the contrary, if these conditions of government be enacted, our constitution will be amended, and our grievances be easily redressed by a due execution of our own laws, which to this day we have never been able to obtain."

The clauses that I have mentioned, Nos. 1, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 12, ran thus, after a prefatory enactment with respect to the Parliament, a convention of estates for the purpose of securing the execution of the clauses.

The first was this: — "1. That elections shall be made at every Michaelmas head court for a new Parliament every year; to sit the first of November next following, and adjourn themselves from time to time, till next Michaelmas; that they choose their own president; and that every thing shall be determined by balloting, in place of voting."

The fifth was, — "5. That a committee of one-and-thirty members, of which nine to be a quorum, chosen out of their own number by every Parliament, shall, during the intervals of Parliament, under the king, have the administration of the government, be his Council, and accountable to the next Parliament; with power, in extraordinary occasions, to call the Parliament together; and that in the said Council all things be determined by balloting, in place of voting."

"6. That the king, without consent of Parliament, shall not have the power of making peace and war, or that of concluding any treaty with any other state or potentate."

"7. That all places and offices, both civil and military, and all pensions formerly conferred by our kings, shall ever after be given by Parliament."

"8. That no regiment or company of horse, foot, or dragoons be kept on foot in peace or war, but by consent of Parliament."

"9. That all the fencible men of the nation, betwixt sixty and sixteen, be, with all diligence possible, armed with bayonets, and firelocks all of a calibre, and continue always provided in such arms, with ammunition suitable."

"12. That, if any king break in upon any of these conditions of government, he shall, by the estates, be declared to have forfeited the crown."

It is true that the act thus proposed by Fletcher never passed the Scotch Parliament exactly in these terms. But it is, notwithstanding, a very sufficient exemplification of the species of reasoning that was then prevalent, and of the temper of the times. The same may be said of different limitations proposed by the same patriot, which were overruled by only eleven voices.

But it is now necessary for me to add, that an Act of Security was really carried by Fletcher and the patriots, in the more important particulars not different; it was carried by the assistance of the Jacobites and other opponents to government. This act, though short, has with great stupidity been omitted by De Foe, because, says he, it may be found in the Scotch statute-book; nor is it, as it ought to be, in Cobbett's appendix, — at least, not given in its express words, and as it was left at last to stand. The substance of it is given by Laing. The act itself may be found in one of the pamphlets of the day, entitled "An Account of the Proceedings of the Parliament of Scotland," in the Trinity Library. The clauses were debated, each as if it had been a separate act, and some of them may be seen in this detached state in Cobbett. Indeed, the greatest part of the book I have just mentioned, in the Trinity Library, is copied out into the appendix of Cobbett; and though the Act of Security, which was at last voted by fifty-nine voices, is not there given in express words, as it should have been, still the student may see in Cobbett the clauses that were proposed and debated, one by one, and will be tolerably well apprised (though not so readily or easily as he might have been) of the particular provisions and meaning of the act.

You will easily see that it is such an act as could not be agreeable to the government or people of England; such an act as made the connection between the two countries frail and slight; such an act as tended to rob the superior country of most of the advantages that were supposed to result from the connection between them.



After first mentioning, that, on the death of the sovereign, the sitting Parliament, or the last Parliament, were to assemble and offer the crown on the conditions of the Claim of Right, a claim analogous to our Bill of Rights, the act goes on to say, that the monarch is not to be the "successor to the crown of England, unless that in this present session of Parliament, and any other session of this or any ensuing Parliament during her Majesty's reign, there be such conditions of government settled and enacted as may secure the honor and sovereignty of this crown and kingdom, the freedom, frequency, and power of Parliaments, the religion, liberty, and trade of the nation, from English or any foreign influence, with power to the said meeting of estates to add such further conditions of government as they shall think necessary, the same being consistent with and no ways derogatory from those which shall be enacted in this and any other session of Parliament during her Majesty's reign;\* and further, but prejudice of the generality foresaid, it is hereby specially statute, enacted, and declared, that it shall not be in the power of the said meeting of estates to name the successor of the crown of England to be successor to the imperial crown of this realm, nor shall the same person be capable, in any event, to be king or queen of both realms," — that is, Scotland was to have a new king, not the English king, — "unless a free communication of trade, the freedom of navigation, and the liberty of the plantations be fully agreed to and established, by the Parliament and kingdom of England, to the kingdom and subjects of Scotland," &c.

And again, for the purpose of destroying all English influence during the interregnum, it was ordained that all commissions granted to the officers of state, lords of treasury, &c., should, by the decease of the king or queen reigning, become null and void. It was enacted also, "that the whole Protestant heritors, and all the burghs, shall forthwith provide themselves with firearms for all the fencible men," &c.; "and the said heritors and burghs are hereby empowered and ordained to discipline and exercise their said fencible men," &c., &c.

After this formidable act, another was passed to declare that the prerogative of declaring war and peace should be exerted by the sovereign with the consent of the estates. This was for the purpose of leaving Scotland at liberty to engage, or not, as she thought best, in the Continental wars of England.

\* The clause which follows is wanting in the act as finally approved by the queen; yet the Parliamentary journals show that it was regularly incorporated into the original bill, and they afford no evidence of its having been subsequently reconsidered and struck out by the legislature. See Acts of the Parliaments of Scotland (printed by command of George IV., 1824), Vol. xi. pp. 137, 70, and App. 24. — Laing, on the authority of Sir J. Clerk (*Memoirs and History of the Union*, MS.), states that it "was read and voted, but by some artifice omitted in the act." *History of Scotland*, by Malcolm Laing, Esq., (London, 1800,) Vol. ii. p. 283, note. — N.

The English ministry had, therefore, now to determine whether they should advise the queen to assent to this act, and make it law, or refuse her assent, risk a total breach with the Parliament of Scotland, receive no more supplies, and have the act returned upon her in different shapes, if the Parliament was sitting, — perhaps have the country in a state of rebellion on the very first opportunity, if the Parliament was dissolved. Such was the crisis I have been speaking of.

We here see, distinctly shown, what is sometimes the effect and what is always the tendency of harsh government, coöperating with the real difficulties which the case of connected countries necessarily involves.

Now the next question I would ask is this, — whether any provision short of those in the act that passed, or even short of the limitations first proposed by Fletcher, and which I first read, would be sufficient properly to secure the ends proposed. It is very true that these limitations first proposed would have gone nigh to convert the monarchy of Scotland into a sort of republic with a stadtholder or president at its head; at all events, they would have formed a sort of experiment, to show with how little power in the monarch a mixed government might be carried on.

But what is the conclusion of the whole? Surely this, — the care, circumspection, and kindness with which the ministry of a superior nation should carry on the government of any inferior and connected nation. We may here see plainly what men of intelligence and strong feelings are constantly thinking, while a cabinet is despising their country, its interests and its opinions. The truth, and the whole truth, is here fully displayed.

One word more in the way of narrative, and for the same purpose of attracting your notice to the whole. The English minister, Godolphin, in the absence, as he thought, of every other alternative, at last advised the queen to give the royal assent to this Act of Security, and it was accordingly passed. Wharton, his political opponent, now triumphed; “I have now, then,” said he, to quote his own expression, “I have now the treasurer’s head in a bag.” Godolphin was probably much of the same opinion; and even the English nation — unfeeling as they had been to the interests and happiness of Scotland, and selfish and stupid as they were, and always will be, to the claims and merits of every other nation, when their own trade to their colonies, and their own manufactures, are concerned — could at length, and for once, in this critical emergence, perceive that sacrifices must be made, and, at all events, that such questions as had lately been agitated in Scotland, nearly amounting to a revolution and a civil war, must be avoided. There seemed no other way of attempting to avoid them but by a union of the two kingdoms, complete and entire; and in this manner the English nation, as well as the English ministry,



were at last rendered no longer the coy and supercilious parties with whom Scotland had before to treat, but the ardent proposers and claimants of a measure, without which, as they represented, and truly represented, all chance for the tranquillity and prosperity of both countries was at an end.

I stop to observe, that, when the Act of Security was known in England, a *retaliating act* was passed by the English Parliament; that is, a proper spirit, as it was called, was shown, and the breach, in fact, made wider, and the crisis more dangerous. This sort of spirit, or rather of folly, on such occasions is always shown. What was the result? Before the Scotch Parliament could be brought to treat of the Union *at all*, the English Parliament were obliged to repeal their act.

The point of interest that next presents itself is, *how* the Union was carried. This is a part of the subject which cannot be contemplated without pain. It was carried by force and fraud. The victories of the Duke of Marlborough left England with a strong military force at her disposal; and the Duke of Hamilton proved at last a traitor to his country; so did others. This foul name must belong to him, and must always more or less belong to all men who on great public occasions pursue even the right measure *only* because they are corrupted, who act upon any motives but those of the good of their country. Men may mistake the interests of their country; this is very pardonable; they cannot engage to be wise, but they may to be honest. It is of no consequence in what manner the bribe that makes them otherwise is administered, — a place to their friends, a purse thrown to themselves, or a coronet to their descendants, — the business is the same; and this deflection from virtue, this sacrifice of principle, is in no way to be distinguished from the acts of dishonesty, from the mere picking and stealing, of the vulgar, but that there is no personal risk incurred by the great, and that the consequences are far more important to society.

This part of the subject is painful on another account. The Union was a measure clearly conducive to the happiness of both kingdoms. The English ministry and nation had been thoroughly frightened, and they therefore made the terms of the Union as reasonable and as advantageous as they could, the better to preclude opposition. It is, therefore, very melancholy to observe, in the first place, that a great nation like England could never adopt a proper system of policy *before*, and never behave with proper liberality and prudence, till both were extorted from her by the ungenerous motives of selfishness and fear.

It is, again, very mortifying to observe how little the affairs of nations are affected by the influence of any calm and deliberating wisdom. The real merits of the measure seem to have had but little effect with the generality of those concerned; a sort of opposition re-

sounded from every quarter. The meanness, ignorance, and cowardice of it are instructive.

We shall have our religion, said the Presbytery of Scotland, destroyed by the bishops in the English house. How can our sixteen peers oppose them? — The Church, said the English bishops, on the contrary, the Church of England will be swept away, as it has before been, in the time of Charles the First, by this new influx of Presbyterians.

Our manufactures will move away to the poor country where labor is cheap, said the English artists. — We shall be ruined, said the Scotch, by the superior articles of the English; if they are allowed to bring them into our markets, how can we contend with their advantages of skill and capital?

What security for our country or our constitution, said the Scotch politicians, when the union has been once made? We have only forty-five members in the one house, and sixteen in the other; how can these oppose the whole English legislature? We are destroyed, and that for ever. — What will become of us, said the English, when this new northern hive is allowed to swarm and settle upon our country and upon our houses of legislature? These are invaders that are hungry, intelligent, and servile; neither post nor place will be left for any of us.

“The prostrate South to the destroyer yields  
Its purple harvests and its golden fields.”

Such are always, on great occasions like these, on subjects of great national concern, — unions of kingdoms, for instance, treaties of commerce, treaties of peace, abolitions of slavery, — such are always the contracted, wretched arguments and pretences which men make use of when they affect to debate, and are in fact not debating, but thinking only of themselves and their own supposed interests.

On this subject of the Union, the speeches of Lord Belhaven have been always adverted to. They are highly deserving of your perusal. They are rich with the proper beauties of eloquence, and very creditable to his age and nation. His celebrated speech you will of course examine. It has great merits, but appears to me (if for a moment I may digress, merely to allude to a point of taste) objectionable in its original conception. It endeavours to accomplish two ends: first, the entire rejection of the Union, be the terms what they may; secondly, its rejection on account of the terms. These objects are too much intermixed and united; eloquence, more especially eloquence of the character of Lord Belhaven's, should attempt some one great object, and entirely carry it, or entirely fail; it should throw all its force on the enemy, and carry every thing by storm, or instantly retire; not descend to all the manœuvres and forms of a regular engagement. The speech, too, begins with images and ends with reasonings.



It comes full and majestic down its course, and then squanders itself into many channels, and seems to disappear as it proceeds to its termination. There can be no greater fault than this.

But I haste to call your attention to the speech of Mr. Seton, as well as that of Lord Belhaven. Seton spoke in favor of the Union. The speeches are very different in their character as well as their import.

And now I must digress for another moment, to observe that eloquence and wisdom are by no means the same thing. They are sometimes united, but not necessarily, — perhaps never, when eloquence is the *mere* gift of nature rather than the slow result of nature and art conjoined. A ready supply of glittering language, and an ardent conception, — that is, a fertile imagination, and quick feelings, united to a retentive memory, — these are together quite sufficient to make an orator, but by no means to make a wise man; to make a speaker or even a leader in a popular assembly, but not necessarily a statesman. Amplification, for instance, is the great business of eloquence; while the first occupation of wisdom is to reduce every thing, if possible, to its original elements. The one distinguishes not, examines not, hesitates not, reflects not; the other is cautious, scrupulous, precise, patient, and deliberative. Enthusiasm is the soul of the one, calmness the essence of the other.

I would recommend the speeches of Mr. Seton and Lord Belhaven, not only as very remarkable speeches on a very great occasion, and therefore as subjects of history, but as very finished specimens of the difference which I conceive to exist between wisdom and eloquence, and therefore fitted, if this distinction be just, to illustrate a truth of very ordinary application, and therefore of some value in human life.

I have omitted, when speaking of Fletcher, to mention that those who meet with his works should look at his Account of a Conversation concerning a Right Regulation of Governments for the Common Good of Mankind. It is in the repulsive form of dialogue, but it is the best exhibition of his political views, and on the whole the best of his works.

After all, Fletcher had the fault which so often belongs to men of strong feelings and earnest thought, when they meditate on the improvement of the affairs of the world, — he was not sufficiently practical. He had brooded over the contests and ambition of the nations of Europe, over the vices and follies of a great metropolis; he had satisfied himself, that Scotland, “in a state of separation from England, would be perpetually involved in bloody and destructive wars; and, if united,\* must of necessity fall under the miserable and lan-

\* There is an important omission in this place, giving an air of paradox to the reasoning, which disappears on a view of the entire passage in its proper connection. The sentence here quoted is taken from the work noticed above, — “Account of a Conversa-

guishing condition" (such are his expressions) "of all places that depend on a remote seat of government."

His plan for the remedy of these evils was, to divide Europe into different portions, each adequate to its own defence, and accommodated by forts and capitals for the purpose, but not fitted for schemes of offence and aggrandizement. In England and Scotland were to be formed, in the mean time, about a dozen capital cities, instead of one overgrown capital like London; by which means all the benefits, as he conceived, of our present metropolis would be secured, and its serious evils avoided. But without mentioning the very indispensable advantages that result from the concentration of so much of the affluence, genius, and intelligence of the people into one point, advantages which seem never to have occurred to him, it seems sufficient to observe, in a few, short, melancholy words, that the great difficulty, on all occasions of projected improvement, is, to form a plan that is practical; and that he who proposes what cannot possibly be expected to take place does nothing, — does worse than nothing, for he makes the very cause of improvement ridiculous.

The particular temperament of Fletcher's mind, his disposition to attempt what he thought just rather than gain the good which was possible, the common mistake of virtuous reformers, operated, as it will always do, most unfortunately for himself and all those whose interests he could have wished to promote. If he and the patriots had made their bargain, and consented to support the measure of the Union in case certain conditions were complied with, — if they had submitted to turn to the best account this experiment for the improvement of the situation of both countries, there can be no doubt that the twentieth article, respecting heritable offices, superiorities, &c., &c., might have been materially modified, or perhaps, as in Cromwell's wiser ordinance, made directly the reverse of what it was left to stand; that the twenty-first article, also, might have been modified; and by these means the system of vassalage and the representation of Scotland might not have been left in a state fitted only, in succeeding times, to disgrace the legislature and injure the best interests of both kingdoms.

tion concerning a Right Regulation of Governments," &c. — "'I perceive now,' said Sir Edward, 'the tendency of all this discourse. On my conscience, he has contrived the whole scheme to no other end than to set his own country on an equal foot with England and the rest of the world.' 'To tell you the truth,' said I, 'the insuperable difficulty I found of making my country happy by any other way led me insensibly to the discovery of these things; which, if I mistake not, have no other tendency than to render, not only my own country, but all mankind, as happy as the imperfections of human nature will admit. For I considered, that, in a state of separation from England, my country would be perpetually involved in bloody and destructive wars. And if we should be united to that kingdom in any other manner [that is, in any other manner than on an equal foot], we must of necessity fall under the miserable and languishing condition of all places that depend upon a remote seat of government.'" The Political Works of Andrew Fletcher, Esq., of Saltoun, (Glasgow, 1749,) pp. 317, 318. — N.



What in the mean time he attempted failed. The very Act of Security, which he carried, became, as he might have foreseen, the very reason why the English were determined at all events to carry the Union. The Union became a direct consequence of the dilemma to which the two kingdoms were thus reduced, and we can conceive no sensations more keen and intolerable than were those of Fletcher and the patriots, who were now to find every labor of their understandings defeated, and every passion of their hearts disappointed.

Before I conclude this subject, I must mention, that the remainder of the book of De Foe, that is, the greater part of it, is a formal account of the articles of the treaty of Union, and the discussions which took place. But these discussions can now interest or instruct only as specimens of the details and reasonings of men of business, when the commercial and ordinary concerns of nations are to be settled by treaties and mutual concessions. They give us, also, some insight into the relative state of the commerce, laws, and manufactures of the two countries at the time. But the pages of De Foe are, on the whole, formal and dull, and there is not even as good an account of the tumults at Edinburgh as might have been expected, though what is given forms one of the most interesting parts of the work. There is the same sort of formal, official representation of the Union, and its attendant circumstances and debates, in Mr. Bruce. But with respect to both publications, it is to be observed, that from those who are employed by cabinet ministers to forward a great measure, like De Foe, or to report a great measure, like Mr. Bruce, it is only information of a particular complexion than can be expected.

With respect to the consequences of the Union, a considerable time elapsed, as will always be the case in such circumstances, before those happy effects took place which the measure was so fitted to produce. For this part of the subject I must refer you to Laing, who is, indeed, too concise and too general in this very interesting part of his work, but who is an intelligent writer, and who at least gives more information on the point than others.

The history of Scotland becomes, about the time of the Revolution, interesting to mankind, for it becomes connected with the Revolution in England, an event in which the best interests of human nature were deeply concerned. If Scotland had not sufficiently sympathized with England, if William had not been acknowledged, and if afterwards the Protestant line of succession had not been established in both parts of the island, — if a civil war had ensued, and if the hardy and enthusiastic Jacobites of the North had been joined by their affluent and powerful neighbours, the Jacobites of the South, the exiled family might at last have been restored, the Revolution might have failed, and been a standing example for the generous and brave in every age and country, of the difficulties which attend all enterprises for the liberty of the people, — enterprises alike accom-

panied, it would have been said, with disappointment and ruin, whether attempted by Hampden and the patriots in the time of Charles, or by Lord Somers and King William in the reign of James. Happily, an issue so deplorable was escaped; but the manner in which it was escaped gives an importance to this period of the history of Scotland which I think may well claim your attention, and which might, I must also think, have deserved the labors of Dr. Robertson. The subject, however, devolved upon Mr. Laing, and his very respectable History, particularly the second volume, I cannot but request you to peruse.

I am hastening to my conclusion, but I must take this my only opportunity to say, in a few words, what I have to offer with respect to this interesting country of Scotland. Its history will of course be read in Dr. Robertson, and as his work is one of the most early books that are put into our hands, it must be read anew, for it is read before it can be understood. The history, indeed, presents a turbid and repulsive scene, which would have been little known to the inhabitants of this country, and still less to the readers of the Continent, if the picture of it had not been drawn by so masterly a hand, and if a ray of softer and more attractive light had not been shot athwart the gloom by the beauty and sufferings of the unfortunate, but not faultless, Mary.

Those difficulties with which Dr. Robertson had to struggle, arising from the rude nature of the documents from which his History was to be drawn up, and which necessarily constitute so much of the merit of the work, cannot well be known by an English reader, but they may be distantly comprehended from the account of his life by Dugald Stewart, which should on this and many other accounts be read. Much of this sort of merit belongs also to Mr. Laing. By the labors of the two the public are put into possession of the whole of the history of Scotland that is important to us, and are furnished with what is valuable in those original materials which no philosophic diligence or taste for historical inquiry would ever have induced readers on this side the Tweed to estimate or examine for themselves.

The first part of the history of Scotland is discussed only in a rapid and general manner by Dr. Robertson. The real subjects of his work are, very properly, the Reformation, Elizabeth, and Mary. At the close of the whole there are a few pages, by way of conclusion, that are highly worthy of your meditation; but to these must be added the first one hundred pages of the third volume of Millar's Account of the English Government, for these supply what cannot be so well found elsewhere, philosophic remarks and information on the constitution and government of Scotland.

The student cannot fail to keep in mind the history of the legislature and Parliaments of his own country while he is reading of those



of Scotland. The fortunate manner in which our own Parliament fell into two houses, and remained, not, as in Scotland, united in one house, again presents itself to our observation, and its consequences to our reflection. The peculiarity in the Scotch Parliament, of the Lords of Articles, is also remarkable, and in its history full of instruction.

On the whole, Scotland, as a country, has not been fortunate. May her subsequent prosperity reward, however late, the intelligence and courage by which her sons are distinguished! She was placed, from the first, in proximity with a powerful state; a situation most unfavorable. For a long series of years she had her monarchy and her aristocracy; but though they were directly opposed, and each abated the tyranny of the other, unhappily, no other power in the state ever seemed to exist. The people were nothing. Even the union of the two crowns in the person of our James the First was unfavorable to her liberties; and it was not till the Revolution in 1688 that the interests of the people began to be considered, — a late period, this, in the history of Europe. In the general struggle and contests that accompanied the Reformation, that Christian church, the Presbyterian, which, after the greatest calamities and the exercise of the most elevated virtues, she at last acquired for herself, as what she thought best, though not without its own very important merits, had been long distinguished for harshness, fanaticism, and intolerance. The union of the two kingdoms in the reign of Anne improved her condition in all these respects, but improved it slowly. Her system of law ever was, and has still remained, tedious, inconvenient, and expensive; her system of representation wretched. The consequences of such a system have been but too inevitable. While her moral and political writers are of the most enlightened, bold, and generous cast, and are accused only of pushing the principles of speculation and inquiry too far, her practical statesmen and politicians have been in general remarkable chiefly for their selfishness and servility; and the same union of the two countries, which has added strength and range to our philosophy, fervor to our poetry, and spirit to our arms, has certainly not been favorable to the political morality, and therefore not favorable to the civil liberties, of England.

## LECTURE XXVI.

SIR ROBERT WALPOLE.

HAVING delivered to you what I had to offer on the subject of the union of Scotland, we must now return to the history of England, which we left on the accession of George the First. The first object that claims our attention is the violence of the Whigs on their restoration to power. Of this violence, among the most durable monuments must be mentioned the articles of impeachment against Oxford, Bolingbroke, and Ormond, and the report of a committee of the House of Commons commissioned to collect and examine such documents as were connected with the peace of Utrecht. This report and these articles become interesting from the great events to which they relate, and the distinguished characters whose private integrity and political reputation are concerned, — Prior, Bolingbroke, Oxford; and lastly, their accusers, the great leaders of the Whig party, Walpole and others.

It must be confessed that these documents are much degraded by the foul insinuations and expressions of virulence which they contain. But suppose these terms of virulence, these serious accusations made by the Whigs, undeserved, there will still remain a very heavy weight of blame to be endured by the Tory leaders. They might not merit the title, which they sometimes received, of “the Frenchified ministry”; they might not have been guilty (I use the language of their Whig opponents) “of forming, without regard to the honor or safety of her late Majesty, maliciously and wickedly, a most treacherous and pernicious contrivance and confederacy to set on foot a dishonorable and destructive negotiation,” &c., &c.; but they were too much disposed to secure themselves in power, and to make a peace at all events, as a means to accomplish that end; they were too ready to make a peace with or without their allies; and their conduct was thus rendered not always wise, and sometimes even dishonorable.

In the writings of Mr. Coxe you will see the opinion of a very regular and respectable historian, and it is entirely against the Tory ministry. He is even more decided, and more disposed to reprobate their conduct, in his late work on the Kings of Spain of the House of Bourbon, than before; that is, the more he has read and examined, the more unfavorably he thinks of them. The War of the Succession and the peace of Utrecht cannot, indeed, be properly estimated without a reference to his works, particularly his last work, on Spain. I conclude, from the general tenor of his expressions and manner, that



he is prepared to say that Europe is at this moment suffering, and has never ceased to suffer, from the unpardonable faults and mistakes of the Tory ministry of Queen Anne.

We thus arrive at that particular period of our history which may be described under the general term of the era of the administration, or at least of the influence and administration, of Sir Robert Walpole. It is important, because the Brunswick family were establishing themselves, during this interval, upon the throne of these kingdoms, and because in their success were involved the concluding fortunes of the Revolution. This great and happy renovation or assertion of the free principles of our mixed government had been with difficulty accomplished by the illustrious William. The splendid victories of Marlborough threw a glory around the Whigs, the party which he at last espoused, and for some time seemed to set at a distance all hopes of a counter-revolution in favor of the Stuarts; but these hopes had so revived about the close of the reign of Anne, and it was an experiment so novel and unpromising to bring a new race of princes from Germany to rule the kingdom, ignorant of its constitution, and even of its language, that a very considerable interest belongs to this part of our history from the uncertainty that on this account still hung over the issue of the great struggle that had been made for our liberties.

The merit of Sir Robert Walpole has been always understood to be the transcendent merit of having most materially contributed to establish the present family on the throne, or, in other words, of having rendered at last triumphant the great cause of the Revolution of 1688. This is the first and great interest that belongs to these times, and to the character of this minister. There are, however, other subjects of curiosity connected with this era. It was still the classic age of England. The events and characters belonging to it are still illustrated in the immortal writings of Pope, of Addison, of Bolingbroke, and Swift. The Parliamentary leaders were men of distinguished ability, — Walpole, Pulteney, Shippen, Sir William Wyndham, Lord Hardwicke, Lord Carteret, Lord Chesterfield; and it was towards the close of the same era that first arose the great orator of England, the first Mr. Pitt, who was afterwards destined to realize, on many occasions, even the splendid visions which have been given of the eloquence of Demosthenes by the enthusiastic admiration of Longinus.

Of the different topics that occur in the perusal of this part of our history, several are very striking, and there are some that can never lose their importance: the Septennial Bill, — the South-Sea Scheme, — the Peerage Bill, — the rise and progress of the sinking fund, — the national debt, — the secret and open efforts that were made to restore the Pretender, — the long peace that was maintained between England and France, — the struggles of the great Tory, Whig, and Jacobite parties, — the views and language of each, — the concerns of Ripperda, Atterbury, Bolingbroke; and considerable entertain-

ment, and very rational entertainment, may be derived from such particulars as have come down to us of the character and manners of the first two monarchs of the house of Brunswick, and more particularly of Queen Caroline, not to mention such anecdotes as remain of the German favorites and mistresses by which these reigns were so unfortunately disgraced.

Such is a slight and general view of the attractions that this era of our history presents to those who would wish reasonably to amuse their leisure or usefully to employ their diligence in historical pursuits. It happens, too, that the whole is put immediately within the reach of every reader by the labors of Mr. Coxe. His *Memoirs of Sir Robert Walpole*, in the first volume, give an authentic account of the views and situation of that minister from time to time, and of the measures that were the result. The two succeeding volumes contain the documents on which most of the representations contained in the first are founded. In the preface is given a reference to other great works connected with this subject, — *Boyer's Political State*, and others. These works are voluminous, and seldom to be met with but in particular libraries in London, — in the British Museum, for instance. In addition to the work of Coxe, we have also accounts of the public debates in the Lords and Commons, and we have *Tindal's History*.

On the whole, therefore, I would recommend to my hearers to take the modern publication of Belsham, and to read it in conjunction with Coxe; then to refer occasionally to the two volumes of the correspondence of Coxe; and to refer continually to the Parliamentary debates, which may be read in Cobbett.

*Tindal's History* is valuable, and should be looked at when the subject is important. *Smollett's work* is a rapid performance, but not worthy of its author. Smollett was a man not only possessed of a strong vein of coarse humor, but one of laborious activity and of a powerful mind, fitted therefore to succeed in a literary enterprise. On this occasion, however, it is understood that he was desirous only, and employed only, to draw up a narrative on the Tory side of the question. It was his fate, as it has been but too often the unhappy fate of men of genius, to be obliged to convert literature into a means of subsistence.

On the whole, Coxe's book and Belsham's, with a reference to some of the principal debates, will be sufficient for the general reader. The preface to Coxe's work, and the notes, will give sufficient information to those who think it necessary to investigate to the utmost the whole, or any particular part, of this period of our annals.

It will be found often entertaining and instructive to turn over the leaves of the *London Magazine* and the *Gentleman's Magazine*. Publications like these, when they can be had, give the manners and



opinions living as they rise, and seem to have been the precursors of the more ample and regular annual registers, which will hereafter afford so endless a field of amusement and inquiry to the philosophic readers of history.

I have hitherto said nothing of the Continental politics of these times. They may be studied in Coxe, — not only in his *Life of Sir Robert Walpole*, but in his second work, the *Life of Sir Robert's* brother, Horace Lord Walpole. Were Europe now what it once was, I should recommend them to be so studied very attentively, but I know not that such attentive study can now be thought very necessary. The intrigues and negotiations connected with them were complicated and tedious. They were the subjects of great controversy; Pulteney and the opposition contending that the interest of Britain was sacrificed to Hanover, — Walpole and his brother insisting that the interest of Britain was steadily pursued. The volumes of Coxe afford ample opportunity to those who wish to study this part of the general subject, and two or three of the pamphlets he alludes to will be found in all collections of pamphlets relating to these times, and may be looked at.

The chief reason why I should wish the Continental politics and the documents connected with them to be considered is, that they are a good study to a statesman, because courts, and cabinets, and ministers, and ambassadors are much the same at all times, with the exception of any such extraordinary crisis as has occurred during the opening and progress of the French Revolution; consequently, they who wish to know how they are to comport themselves, the chicanery they are to meet with, the acuteness and fine talents which they ought to possess (a point which our young men of family do not always consider, when they propose themselves for diplomatic situations), they who wish to know the caution with which they must proceed, when they act as ministers of state or ambassadors; may here find their lesson, and better given, perhaps, than in any other historical records that can be mentioned, because the documents furnished by Coxe are authentic, and many of them of a confidential nature. In this way, then, and for this purpose, they may be studied to advantage.

The great subjects that are before the student are, as usual, the state and progress of the civil liberties of the country, of the religious liberties, and, now more than ever, its commercial prosperity, under which head must be included the new system of a regular national debt, with all its consequences.

And first, with respect to the state and progress of the civil liberties of the country.

The great point, and that which I have mentioned as giving a predominant interest to the whole, as forming the more peculiar merit of Walpole, is, that he secured the house of Hanover on the throne.

In this every thing that concerned the civil and religious liberties of the country may be considered as involved, for, if this had not been effected, the experiment of the Revolution had failed, and with it the great cause of both.

But in other respects, the civil liberties of the country were partly progressive, and partly not. Thus, for instance, they were progressive, because the speeches from the throne always proceeded upon principles favorable to the liberties of the subject, some of them remarkably so: you will see specimens of them in the Note-book on the table. No harsh measures were insisted upon; the excise scheme was given up, entirely upon the ground of the expediency of mild government; Sir Robert Walpole declaring, and to his immortal honor declaring, that, though his opinion remained the same, he would not be the minister who should carry on any measure of this sort by force. Not only in England, but in Scotland and in Ireland, proper attention was shown to public opinion by this wise, and, in this respect, very virtuous minister. Publications of great spirit, ability, and virulence continually issued from the press in opposition to his administration; yet the liberty of the press was, by the minister, not violated. It even appears that Sir Robert had his own writers in regular pay, who, as well as Lord Hervey and his brother, addressed the public in his defence, and that a continual appeal was thus made to the community in a way very well fitted, notwithstanding all that may be said of faction and party, to advance their improvement and political happiness.

Particulars of this nature are very favorable specimens of this minister, and of the progress of the civil liberties of the country. There are others not so. The Septennial Bill had been carried, and yet place bills during the era of his power were always rejected. Again, when each new Parliament met, the decisions on controverted elections were made, not so much upon the merits of the case, as upon the party principles of the candidate; and because Sir Robert was the minister, and could therefore carry all such questions in favor of his own friends, no effort was made to remedy so obvious and so fatal a defect in the constitution.

But it is impossible for the student to form any proper estimate of the progress and state of the civil liberties of the country, during this period, without adverting to the debates that took place in the houses of Parliament, and to these, therefore, I must direct your attention.

I must observe, however, once for all, that the exact point of the propriety or impropriety of the reasonings of our ancestors is not so much the question itself, as what was the spirit, and what the notions, which were then thought constitutional and worthy the adoption of Englishmen. These may be right, though their application may be wrong. What the inhabitants of a free country should endeavour to



attain is, to preserve in purity and vigor those feelings and those principles which did their ancestors honor, and then afterwards shape and direct them to the accomplishment of proper objects, as circumstances require.

What I would therefore propose to the student is, to take the debates, and observe those subjects which are more evidently of a general and constitutional nature. Let him consider what was, on such occasions, the language of our patriots and statesmen, and he will then derive a general impression from the whole which cannot possibly be conveyed to him by any other means.

Let him take, for instance, the question of the Mutiny Act. The speeches in the House of Commons are, it is true, not given, but he will see that the question of death (that is, death to be inflicted by the military, not the civil power) was carried only by two hundred and forty-seven to two hundred and twenty-nine; and when he follows the bill, as he must in all cases do, to the House of Lords, he will there see a debate, and he must in this case, as in all others, mark well the protest. The articles of war may be found in Tindal's History, and should be read.

Again, let him observe, by all means, the debates that took place, when the number of the forces for each year came to be voted. This subject should be pursued from volume to volume. The debates were always interesting, characteristic of the times, of the constitutional notions of our ancestors, and of the leading speakers of the Houses. In the course of one of these debates, Shippen, the famous Tory, or rather Jacobite member, was sent to the Tower. In one of these discussions there is a very good speech from Mr. Jefferies. In the Lords, too, you will find the debates on this subject (the subject, in fact, of a standing army) well worthy that great assembly, and the protests sometimes very good.

Again, in these debates of the two Houses, during the era before us, the subject of pensions and places often occurred, and the proceedings that took place should always be noted. A great jealousy on this subject was considered, in these days, as patriotic; I say patriotic, because these bills were contended for by the opposition; and an opposition, whatever may be thought of their real opinions and views, must at least endeavour to distinguish themselves by an apparent attachment to such measures as awaken the honest approbation of the community. Of this character, therefore, must have been thought their efforts to diminish the influence of the crown. These efforts were made in motions to address his Majesty to retrench unnecessary pensions, and in bills to limit the number of placemen in the House of Commons. What the court thought of such efforts may be collected from the expression of George the Second, a patriotic monarch, but irritable man, with narrow views, and who therefore honored one of these with the appellation of "that villanous bill."

Bills of this sort sometimes succeeded in the Commons, but always failed in the Lords, Sir Robert thinking it his best policy to stifle them there. The debates must be read in the different volumes. The first speakers interfered, and their speeches continually illustrate the nature of our constitution.

In the Lords, the debates on these occasions were, in general, very good; the protests sometimes remarkable. In one of these debates, Dr. Sherlock, then Bishop of Bangor, expressed himself in terms that seem to have produced a very great sensation at the time: — “That an independent House of Commons was as inconsistent with our constitution as an independent, that is, absolute, king.” It may be remembered, that Dr. Paley, in his chapter on the British Constitution, conducts his reasonings pretty nearly to the same conclusion. I would more particularly refer you to the debate that took place in the Lords, in March, 1739\*: all the great speakers interfered. I am not aware that I could produce, from any of these volumes, a specimen of calm and perspicuous reasoning so beautiful as the speech delivered on this occasion by Lord Carlisle.

It is to be observed in debates like these, that arguments are often brought against the provisions of a bill by those who are unfavorable to the very principle, and who would equally argue against all provisions to the same effect, be they what they might. The first point, therefore, to be considered in reading such debates is, whether the principle is made out to be just and constitutional. The next, and to us an inferior, though still an important consideration, is, whether our ancestors contrived the provisions of these bills with legislative skill; and though this may or may not have been the case, the original principle and intention of the bill may still be right, and worthy of the attention of posterity.

One great question that gives interest to these times, and to the debates of these times, is the Septennial Bill. Originally, the Parliament had no precise limit of duration; one sat in Charles the Second's time for seventeen or eighteen years. William the Third, however, was induced at last to consent to the Triennial Bill, which limited the duration to three years. To enact, therefore, the Septennial Bill was to diminish the extent of the victory which the popular part of the constitution had obtained, and the measure has therefore been always made a matter of reproach to the Whig party. In this reproach, when I first gave lectures, more than twenty years ago, I concurred, — unwillingly, indeed; for to the Whigs of the last century I then believed, and I shall always believe, we owe all the constitutional blessings we enjoy; but I have since satisfied myself, from what I understand of the nature of the Stuart Papers, and what I have learned from other sources, that the measure of the Septennial

\* Old Style. The debate is given in Cobbett under the year 1740. *Parliamentary History*, xi. 510–578. — N.



Bill was necessary to the maintenance of the Brunswick family on the throne, and that a general election at the time could not have been ventured upon. It is to be observed, also, that the Triennial Bill had been enacted but twenty years before, and was a fair subject of revision. The speeches, however, of Shippen and others are worthy of attention; and particularly the speech of Sir Robert, in the year 1734, when the repeal of the bill was brought forward, and when he placed his argument on the fair and right ground, that the Septennial Bill had improved the constitution, and prevented it from being too democratic.\*

One of the most striking circumstances in the administration of Sir Robert Walpole was the conduct of the nation on the subject of the Excise Scheme. It was a very striking exemplification of the constitutional jealousy which animated our ancestors at this particular period. The minister found himself at last obliged to abandon his measure, and the opposition to the bill owed its success entirely to the sensation that was excited in the community on that general ground of constitutional jealousy. "Liberty, property, and no excise," was everywhere the cry, and the cry that triumphed. The sentiment, whether in this instance judiciously applied or not, did the community honor. It was a sentiment received from earlier times, and was, then, even in its application on this occasion, neither so unreasonable nor so unnecessary as by some may have been pretended. Summary convictions before commissioners or justices of the peace, without the intervention of juries, were very properly considered by Englishmen at all times as a subject of alarm and aversion. Equally so, and with equal justice, the entry of a king's officer into the dwelling of a private man by day or by night at his pleasure. That every Englishman's house is his castle has been always a favorite maxim in this happy island; "and when I speak of a castle," said once the great orator of England, Lord Chatham, he who loved to produce and cherish these honorable feelings of his country, "I speak not of a mansion, the abode of some potentate or baron, surrounded with fortifications and towers, and garrisoned with soldiers, but I speak of a tattered and wretched hovel, the dwelling of some laborer or peasant, which the wind and the rain can enter, but the king *cannot* enter."

We may ourselves be obliged to submit to the necessities of our situation, and be satisfied to obtain revenue in the best manner we can, but the notions of our ancestors should never be forgotten; still

\* On this subject, when I first delivered these lectures, I dwelt at some length, summing up first in favor of triennial, afterwards of quinquennial Parliaments; but this was in the reign of George the Third. The question has been fundamentally altered by the passing of the Reform Bill. The difficulty now is, not to keep the representative attentive to the wishes of his constituents, but to keep him from being a delegate. Again, the only means by which the king can maintain his consequence in the system of the constitution is his power of dissolving the Parliament, a power which would be materially, and now dangerously, interfered with by short Parliaments.

less should it be forgotten, that, among many other unhappy effects that accompany a system of taxation, one, and not the least melancholy, is the tendency that every such system has to destroy, more or less, as it is more or less urged, the free spirit, the free laws, and the free men of every regular and civilized community.

We are not, therefore, in my opinion, to read with indifference such sentiments as were then delivered by several members of the House; and we are to pardon men, even if they forget themselves a little, when their feelings are honorable, and the free constitution of a great nation excites their anxiety and alarm. I must refer you to these debates: I had made extracts for the purpose of reading them to you, but I am obliged, for want of time, to omit them.

It will, however, be an eternal honor to the memory of Sir Robert Walpole, that, when his friends wished him to persevere, to despise what they, no doubt, called popular clamor, and show that government was not to be awed, this reasonable minister thought it more becoming to give way, to pay respect to public opinion, as he forfeited no moral duty by doing so, and not to suppose that government has no other and no better attributes under which to be presented to the community than those of force and terror.

I would now wish to draw your attention to another subject, one connected with the character of Sir Robert Walpole, with the history of these times, and with the history of our constitution; I mean the manner, or rather the means, by which Sir Robert Walpole so long conducted the administration of government in this country. These means, it was always objected to him by his opponents, were bribery and corruption, the power of the purse: such is the phrase continually occurring in the writings of Bolingbroke. This representation is considered by Burke as unjust; he considers Sir Robert as having ruled by party and family connections. On the whole, the student may fairly suppose this celebrated minister to have ruled by the powers of his own sound and clear understanding, the effect of his amiable and social qualities; and, in conjunction with these, by what is called the influence of government, no longer appearing, as formerly, in the palpable and offensive forms of the prerogative, but in the natural and peaceful agency of all the posts and employments under the disposal of the crown, in a highly prosperous and civilized state of society. This influence, it is to be observed, is not at all inconsistent with the agency of the party and family connections mentioned by Mr. Burke. Sir Robert Walpole availed himself of both; so have other ministers. The one is, indeed, to a certain extent, connected with the other; for it is by this influence of posts and places that a minister can be assisted in attaching to himself party and family connections, and they their dependants.

The first inquiry, therefore, to be made by the student, as a reader of history, is, how far this influence was or was not favorable to the



country during the times of Sir Robert Walpole. On the one side, — that is, the objectionable nature of this influence, — he will consider how fruitless were the efforts of the opposition to advance the interests of the popular part of the constitution; that the place bills were all lost, and so of every other attempt to the same end. But on the other side he must consider how steadily was maintained the influence of the Hanover family on the throne, — that is, the cause of the Revolution, — which, as I cannot too often repeat, was the real and great question, exceeding every other in importance, not only to the constitution, but even more especially to this popular part of it. Such, indeed, was the very critical nature of this period, the preposterous wishes of the Jacobites, the unfortunate opinions of the Tories, and the disadvantages under which the first two monarchs labored, resulting partly from their situation and partly from their own faults, that it is for the student to consider very carefully, whether it was at all desirable that the influence of the government should have been less than it was during this particular era, and whether Sir Robert's talents, qualities, opinions, and the means of influence which, as minister of the crown, he possessed, did not conspire most happily at this particular juncture for the preservation of the liberties and interests of these kingdoms. This is the question which it is for him to consider, not for me to determine; and this is what I beg leave to remind him is the sort of contemplative and critical manner in which he is to read the history of this, and, as much as possible, the history of every other country.

But when this question has been determined, and it must be determined, I think, in favor of Sir Robert, another yet remains, — how far this influence has been subsequently too great, — that is, not merely during the administration of Sir Robert, which is the first question, but through the periods that have succeeded, which is entirely another.

And in the first place, this question, too, is one partly of historical fact, and must be borne in mind by the student as he descends through the remainder of our history. In the mean time, however, and the better to furnish the student with the principles which he is to apply to the characters and events of our history, it is at this point of his progress that I would propose to him the perusal of some of the writings of Lord Bolingbroke. Lord Bolingbroke is one of the classics of our literature: but he was also one of the great political characters of this period, the opponent and inveterate enemy of Walpole; and his personal qualities and his writings (his political writings, which are all I am now concerned with) may be said to be in reality subjects of history. His Dissertation on Parties (and, out of deference to the opinions of others who admire it, I must also mention his Patriot King) will, I conceive, be quite sufficient for your perusal.

From Lord Bolingbroke's Dissertation on Parties, I would next

recommend you to turn to the work of Mr. Burke, — to his *Thoughts on the Cause of the Present Discontents*, particularly the latter part. These compositions of Lord Bolingbroke and Mr. Burke seem to me connected together. For instance, we have said that Sir Robert governed this country by his personal qualities, and by party and family connections, in conjunction with the influence of the crown. To this system of government Lord Bolingbroke objects. But it is explained and commented upon and defended by Mr. Burke. Again, Lord Bolingbroke conceives the proper effect of the Revolution to be defeated by the powers of corruption which every minister has since enjoyed, and which he derives from the crown. Mr. Burke thinks, with Lord Bolingbroke, that this influence of the crown is, and may be, too great, but he views the subject in a new and different light, and, in fact, conceives that this influence of the crown can now be opposed in practice only by those very party connections which it is the object of Lord Bolingbroke's *Dissertation* to discountenance and destroy. This is a very curious question, and one which can never be without its interest while our free and mixed constitution survives.

There is an air of freedom and purity of principle about such sentiments as are uttered by Lord Bolingbroke (not, indeed, the most exemplary of characters himself) well fitted to captivate the minds of men of virtue and public spirit. Corruption is the great topic of his lamentations and invectives. His great hope is a House of Commons that in some way or other shall be elevated above all sinister views; the members of which, unlike the members of any other body that ever appeared in society, are to be influenced by no consideration but the mere merits of the question before them. Views of this kind are always very animating and attractive to those who, like Lord Bolingbroke, can write or speak beautiful sentences, or think they can, and to many a youthful patriot, whose heart is sufficiently good, and understanding sufficiently somnolent, to dream over the visions of superficial or designing men. Statesmen of any sense or experience look not for such prodigies; they know, as Mr. Burke has observed, what stuff all supernatural virtue is made of; and when the corruption of Parliament is represented as the beginning, middle, and end of all our grievances and calamities, they only see in a talker of this kind an artist who knows not the nature of his materials, or a future courtier at present in disguise; they know that men are, in public, as in private life, some good, some bad, and that to depend on the *unmixed personal* virtue of men, in the formation of a government, as a principle, and a foundation on which to rest the public weal, is puerile and ridiculous in the extreme; that in a constitution, as in a machine, the question always is, Does it work well? and finally, that there is no hope that it should do so, unless the great leading interests, and selfish passions, and *ordinary* virtues of our nature are so



mingled, and opposed, and directed, as in the result to operate pretty steadily to the advancement and security of the public prosperity; that, unless this is done, nothing is done, and that this is done in a most remarkable manner, notwithstanding all its anomalies, in the British constitution. Something is, indeed, said, when useless places at the disposal of the crown are pointed out, and it is proposed to abolish them; remove temptations from men, and you will contribute to make them more virtuous; but nothing can be a more miserable waste of public talents in the speaker or writer, or of public virtue in the patient hearer or reader, than these vague and flowing harangues on the subject of corruption. There are seasons, indeed, when they may fall innocent on the ear, but there are *other* seasons when writings or speeches of this kind are clearly of the nature of sedition, and become perfect treason to the practical liberties and prosperity of the realm; they may be at one time the mere mewlings and wailings of the cradle (such they appear to me), — they may be at another the thunders and lightnings that issue from the tribune.

These observations will, I hope, not be found unreasonable by those who read the works of Lord Bolingbroke, and at the same time observe the world around them. They were made by me many years ago, and succeeding years have but confirmed them. His Dissertation on Parties is, on the whole, too long; it will often feel tedious. The same may be said of all his political works, with the exception of his Letter to Sir William Wyndham, which is a perfect model of writing or speaking to any statesman or man of the world.\*

With respect to the religious liberties of the country, they must be considered as materially advanced during the reign of George the First. They had much declined during the latter part of the reign of Anne. The Occasional Conformity and Schism Bills, which were then passed, had shown the connection that exists between civil and religious liberty, by showing that the same Tory ministers whose opinions were unfavorable to the one would be equally unfavorable to the other. But it is the glory of the reign of George the First and his Whig advisers, it is an eternal honor to the memory of the king, that his first minister, Lord Stanhope, came forward and proposed all the relief and kindness to those who differed from the Establishment which the temper of the community could then be brought to bear, and that they would have done more, if to do more had been in their power. The Occasional Conformity and Schism Acts were repealed, and though the clauses in the Test and Corporation Acts for excluding Dissenters from civil employments were suffered to remain, it had

\* I must observe, as I leave this subject, that positive bribery was practised by Sir Robert, and by other ministers, both before and after his time; by Lord Bute, I believe, the last. Lord North used to job the loans. Mr. Pitt put an end to this disgraceful practice. Whatever may be said to the disparagement of our patriots and statesmen, the standard of public virtue is materially elevated in modern times.

been the original intention of the king and his ministers to repeal these restrictions also. The question of the Test was agitated during Sir Robert's administration; but Sir Robert, though favorable to its repeal, could not venture to make it a measure of government. The debates are worth your perusal, and the proceedings of the legislature with regard to the Quakers were very creditable to Sir Robert and the country.

The circumstance that occurred most favorable to the religious liberties of the country was, that about this period of our history we ceased to hear of the Convocation, — the ecclesiastical parliament. Men of the ecclesiastical profession, however respectable or venerable in their individual capacities, have never met in bodies but they have become examples of any thing but toleration; and this must necessarily be the case, without any particular fault of theirs, from the mere operation of the most established principles of our common nature. But it is on this very account that any change, which has a tendency to remove public concerns of this nature from their particular management to the interference and therefore more equal management of statesmen, must be esteemed materially conducive to the interests of religious liberty. I must not now be mistaken; I speak not with the slightest disrespect of men like these, nor do I speak of them in the regular exercise of their clerical duties. I speak of them when meeting in an ecclesiastical parliament, or in large bodies, — "*interpretando accendunt.*"

Proceeding on in the general survey of our present subject, we may remark that Sir Robert Walpole was a man of good temper and good sense, and therefore not disposed, while minister, to countenance any harsh or offensive measures towards those who differed from the national church. But he can scarcely be considered to have advanced the cause of religious liberty otherwise than by having kept the language, and as much as he could the practice, of the government at all times tolerant and mild.

The commercial prosperity of the country must be considered as having greatly advanced during this period, from the accession of George the First to the Rebellion of 1745. The merits of Sir Robert Walpole have in this respect been rated very high; they are stated to be very great by Mr. Coxe. The subject is treated at pages 163, 164; and an unpublished treatise by Dean Tucker is quoted in Sir Robert's favor. Tucker is very good authority; and, on the whole, the claim of the minister to our praises must be admitted.

But distinctions must be made, such as I apprehend will be found reasonable, whether we are speaking of Sir Robert Walpole in England, or of Colbert in France, or of any other minister, or prince, or government, who are endeavouring to assist the prosperity of those committed to their care.

In the first place, the merit of every man, and of every body of



men, must be estimated with a reference to the times in which they lived. Since the administration of Sir Robert, a new system of political economy has been regularly presented, and successfully presented, by Adam Smith, to the consideration of the rulers of mankind; and we have a right to blame those ministers of our own age who seem ignorant of its principles, though not on this account the ministers of former times.

The good sense of Sir Robert, on particular occasions, enabled him to discover the science of human prosperity; but no enlarged views on the East India question, for instance, on the question of Ireland, or on any other of this nature, appear to have made a part of his ordinary habits of reflection.

“Without being,” says Burke, in his masterly character of him, “a genius of the first class, he was an intelligent, prudent, and safe minister.” This praise, and this abatement of it, we shall find just, even when surveying him as a minister sincerely interested in the commercial advancement of his country. This intelligence, this prudence, still enabled him, without the assistance of the more divine influence of genius, to see and to provide for the interests of a commercial nation; without anticipating the system of Adam Smith, he could, by the operation of his own excellent understanding, perceive that he should assist the prosperity of his country effectually by clearing away, as much as possible, the duties and impositions by which he found our commerce encumbered and impoverished. It is said that he found our book of rates the worst, and left it the best, in Europe, — a most important eulogium. We have here merit, and of a most solid nature; a man in a high station going through minute details and tedious, disgusting examinations, and exerting his patience, his industry, and his talents in a sort of silent and obscure drudgery, where, though they were exerted highly to the benefit of the community, they could not be exerted with that *éclat* to which they most assuredly were entitled.

But his panegyric must stop here. He not only did every thing in his power, and according to the lights which he then possessed, for the emancipation of our commerce from vexatious interruptions and impolitic charges, but, above all, he was the anxious friend, not only of order and mild government at home, but of peace abroad. This is his commercial panegyric, the highest and the best that any minister can aspire to. Men will better their condition, that is, the prosperity of their country will advance, without the assistance of the state, if their exertions are only not interrupted, and their labors not destroyed, by the interference of laws at home and the calamities of war abroad. Political economists require no more from princes, or ministers, or cabinets, or houses of assembly, than that praise, which they so seldom deserve, the praise of being very cautious how they suffer themselves to be involved in war, of being

very cautious how they destroy, in a few years or months, what no efforts of theirs will repair in ages.

With this part of our subject is connected the consideration of the finances of England during this period, the measures of Sir Robert to improve them, and the claim which he has on this account to the approbation of posterity. You will find materials on which to exercise your judgment in Coxe and the debates.

His great merit as a minister of finance has, in fact, been already stated; for he best assists the finances of a country who best assists its prosperity, the source from which revenue is to be derived. But in the official part of his duty, his talents as a man of business seem to have been acknowledged, and may now by posterity be taken for granted. The good sense which he displayed through the whole progress of the affair of the South-Sea Scheme, from its first origin to its final settlement, is alone sufficient to immortalize him. Great credit has always been given him for the measure of the sinking fund. He has incurred much censure for his opposition to the scheme of Sir John Barnard. You will, I hope, be induced to consider these and other particulars of the same kind. They occupy a part of the debates of the two Houses, of the pages of Mr. Coxe, of Sir John Sinclair's work on the Revenue; and to all of these I must refer.

It is from materials such as I have mentioned in the course of this lecture that I think an estimate may be formed of the period we are now considering, and of the merits of Sir Robert Walpole. The Reminiscences of his son, the late Lord Orford, should also be looked at. They are short and entertaining.

The London Magazine, and the Gentleman's, must be consulted, when any particular point in the history of this period is to be discussed. They may even be looked at in conjunction with more regular histories. The times are very faithfully reflected in these passing mirrors. Specimens are here to be found of the most noted publications of the day; essays occur, and often of great merit, on constitutional subjects, and some even on the subjects of political economy. The poetry of Swift and Pope may be seen in extracts adorning these pages, like the verses of the meanest of their contemporaries. Here may be noticed the first efforts of the strength of Johnson. We have the deaths, the marriages, the literary productions, of many whom we have heard of, and of many whom we do not hear of, and who little thought to be so soon forgotten; and if a walk in Westminster Abbey could occupy the mind of Addison, I see not why the student may not resort, for similar purposes of amusement and improvement, to these brief chronicles, these fleeting sketches of life and its concerns, these striking images of the transitory nature of every thing human. Other considerations will occur to him: comparing these periodical journals with our own, it will appear to him, as I conceive, that so-



ciety was less advanced, but that politics were then, as they ought always to be, a subject of great interest to the inhabitants of these kingdoms; and that, although the manners were less refined, and even less decent, (as evidently appears from the complexion of humorous pieces, particularly those in verse,) still that the great qualities of the English character were such as they have been always supposed, and were on the whole creditable to our country.

Notices of these times, and of the great characters by which they were distinguished, may be obtained from the works of Lord Chesterfield. A character of Sir Robert Walpole is very properly extracted by Mr. Coxe from the writings of Mr. Burke, sketched with great accuracy of outline and strength of representation.

The accusations against Sir Robert Walpole, such as they were urged by his opponents in and out of Parliament, in speeches and pamphlets, were these:—his fruitless negotiations, his destructive treaties, his subsidies with a view only to his Majesty's foreign dominions, his votes of credit, his misapplication of the sinking fund, his discountenance of all proper measures for paying off the national debt, his disinclination to prosecute the Spanish war in the West Indies with the necessary vigor,—and, in a word, his putting a country, taxed, burdened, and almost exhausted, to all the annual charges of war, whilst he deprived it of the possibility of reaping any of its advantages by remaining in all the inaction of peace; finally, that it was during his administration, and from the influence of his politics, that France became powerful and Austria declined.

Such were the accusations urged against Sir Robert, and enforced and adorned by the splendid talents of men like Bolingbroke, Pulteney, Shippen, and Sir William Wyndham. These accusations may become very properly subjects of your reflection. They are obviously open to much explanation and discussion; several of them such as a system like Sir Robert's was necessarily exposed to,—a system of preventive and defensive politics.

Lord Orford claims for his father, what cannot, I think, be denied him, the praise of sound judgment, strong abilities, fortitude, calmness, patience, humanity, an easy pleasantry, sound patriotism, and a steady attachment to the family on the throne. These are very great, or very useful, or very agreeable qualities. I see not how they are to be refused to the character of Sir Robert. When these are considered in conjunction with the reasons that are mentioned by Burke for the praise which he so deliberately weighs out to him, the observation of Mr. Belsham may, I think, be acceded to: that “a man, upon the whole, better adapted to the station which he occupied, or better qualified to discharge the various and complicated duties of it, could nowhere be found.”—In the Note-book on the table you will see a character of Sir Robert by Hume, which appears in one of the early and now scarce editions of his *Essays*.

I have now laid before you all I have to offer on those general subjects which are connected with the administration of Sir Robert Walpole. But there is one to which I have not yet adverted, and which you will find fully detailed in the Note-book on the table, — the origin and progress of the dispute with Spain. I cannot here go into the merits of this question; but nothing could be more humane and reasonable than the views and feelings of Sir Robert. I certainly wish to attract your attention to it, because, among the great lessons of history, one of the most important is the policy, the justice, the duty, of the love of peace.

But what truth so obvious as the desirableness of peace? Why insist upon an obligation which has only to be understood, and admitted, — and which is understood as soon as it is proposed? The fact is, that the duty is assented to, but not acted upon. It is with the doctrines of peace as with the doctrines of toleration, — men honor them in their words, not in their conduct; and, with loud protestations of the respect they bear them, are never easy unless they are violating them, never easy unless they are gratifying their irritable passions, and subjecting every one around them, in the one case, to the superiority of their theological knowledge, and, in the other, to the terror of their arms.

This subject, therefore, of the dispute with Spain, you will do well to study. You may do it with convenience in Coxe; look also at the debates. You may in this manner see, if you please, what your ancestors were on this occasion, and what you yourselves will probably be on all similar occasions. None of you can think ever to possess understandings more brilliant or more improved than were those of Pulteney, Sir William Wyndham, Lord Chesterfield, Lord Carteret; and it can be only by taking warning from their mistakes that you can hope to be more wise. I must again repeat that I could wish to attract your attention to these proceedings. I could wish to induce you to draw general conclusions in favor of moderate counsels, pacific sentiments, calm reasonings, and dignified forbearance, on all occasions of our differences with foreign powers, on all occasions when any such momentous interest as the shedding of the blood of man can be at issue. I must entreat you to observe how impossible it was for the minister, Sir Robert Walpole, to state the truth, and the whole truth, without rendering his hearers and the nation quite clamorous and outrageous, — how impossible to state the case of Spain. I must entreat you to consider whether it is not always thus, — I do not mean in our own nation exclusively, but certainly in our own very particularly. I must entreat you to observe the popularity that then belonged to all warlike sentiments, — the violent and offensive terms in which the Spaniards were spoken of on every occasion; and you will then consider the free nature of our government, the ease with which popular sentiments are circulated,



and how readily, in the progress of a quarrel, either of the parties, though right in the origin of the dispute, may become wrong and at last the real aggressor, from the very insulting and overbearing manner in which redress may be claimed.

Certainly, important lessons may be drawn from these proceedings by the inhabitants of this country; and I must now finally observe, as I have before mentioned, that such lessons, in every free country like this, may be very safely drawn, for in any such country there is no chance of any improper tameness or pusillanimity. In any such country personal courage will always be the indispensable requisite of every man, and the counsels of such a country will always be of a warlike, violent, and unjust, rather than of a reasonable, pacific, and equitable nature. The danger is always on that side; and not only the philanthropist, but the statesman, in such a country as ours, can seldom be better employed than in countenancing and propagating, by every means in his power, a love of peace, habits of caution, patience, and good temper, habits of real magnanimity; for what, after all, is magnanimity but the union of such qualities with the fearlessness of danger?

Having thus endeavoured to direct your thoughts to these transactions, and to what I conceive the proper inferences to be deduced from them, I must make one observation more. I have hitherto mentioned the conduct of Sir Robert, during the progress of this dispute with Spain, only to praise it; a more painful task remains. I must dismiss it with endeavours to hold it out to you as a proper subject, in *one* respect, of your censure.

In the course of these discussions, Sir Robert had not done the Spanish cause justice; he had not told his own country the whole truth. This I have already observed. His excuse might be, and it may be admitted, that this was not the way to procure peace, — that there was no chance for peace but his own continuance in power. Yet his patience, his good temper, his reasonableness, his exertions, great and meritorious as they were, in the cabinet and in the senate, were all unavailing. He found them to be so. In defiance of every effort he could make, his eloquence, his influence, his management, his sacrifices of every kind, the event turned out to be, that the two nations were hurried into a war, and that he had no comfort left but that of having strenuously labored to prevent so fatal a termination of their differences.

There is even more than this to be considered. It appears that the king was eager for the war; that Sir Robert was counteracted by the cabinet, blamed by many of his personal friends, reviled by the nation. The question, therefore, which is asked by Coxe should be asked by every reader, — Why did he not resign? Why did he not endeavour to make some impression upon his countrymen by throwing up his emoluments and his honors? This argument, at least,

they could not but have felt. Why were not his own honest fame as a statesman, and his character with posterity, as dear to him as they ought to have been? Why did he not refuse his sanction to a system of conduct which he thought precipitate, violent, and unreasonable?

It cannot be necessary, it cannot be proper, that a minister should have recourse to so strong a measure as the resignation of his office on light grounds and at every turn. Others are to have their opinions as well as himself; mutual concessions and sacrifices may be made by honorable men faithfully coöperating in the administration of a government. But when points of principle in themselves sacred, when questions of importance, like the alternatives of peace and war, are at issue, then, indeed, it is not possible for a man of intelligence or spirit to proceed longer in his doubtful path amid the blended confines of right and wrong; he must no longer assent to what he does not approve. He can discharge no more necessary duty to his country than to avow his opinion and act upon it. It may be that his opinion is right, and a salutary effect may be produced. But, on every supposition, one good, at least, will be attained, — he will give an example of public virtue.

The path of honor is always the path of wisdom; and they who survey the situation of Sir Robert from the moment that he suffered himself to be persuaded by the king to continue in office (for he had the merit of proffering his resignation) will see no reason to call in question this great and universal maxim of human conduct. Sir Robert retained his place but two years, — his place rather than his power, — without comfort to himself or advantage to his reputation. Life itself he retained but a few years longer. What, then, were his gains in return for the mortifications he endured?

It is difficult, indeed, for men properly to engage in the affairs of mankind without being deeply interested in them. It is still more difficult to be thus interested, and at the same time to view them from that commanding height, and with those sentiments of philosophic criticism with which they will come at length to be surveyed by posterity. Yet such is the magnanimity, such the comprehensiveness of judgment, which are, and which ought to be, expected from the rulers of mankind; and it is, therefore, with no pleasure that we observe the character of Sir Robert so strongly marked by the great fault of all statesmen, an inordinate love of power, — that we observe him clinging to office till he was torn and driven from it, and even in his fall casting on it that longing, lingering look which was unbecoming him as a man of spirit, and unworthy of him as a man of virtue.

It is with no pleasure that we afterwards see him depressed and uncomfortable, because, when he was no longer the minister of the crown, no longer the centre round which the business of the empire revolved, he necessarily became an individual, visited, like other individuals, only by those who cherished him for his amiable and social



qualities, or who respected him for his talents and his virtues. Every attention appears to have been paid to him by those whose good opinion he had been accustomed to regard; and what, then, are we to think of the account that is given of this celebrated statesman in the decline and fall of his power and of his life? or rather, what instruction can we hence derive for ourselves?

If, indeed, as appears to have been the case, his residence seemed to him a solitude, — if, indeed, he had little taste for literary occupations, and expressed himself to this effect to a brother statesman who was reading in his library, — if he wished for a resource that would have alleviated, as he said, many tedious hours of his retirement, — if, indeed, it was found (as we are told by Mr. Coxe) that to him who had directed the helm of government in England all speculative opinions appeared dull, — if to him who had drawn all his knowledge from practice all theory appeared trifling, — if to him who had long been the dispenser of wealth and honors a wide difference appeared between the expressions of those who approached him from motives of personal kindness and the homage which had formerly been paid him by those who had courted him from motives of self-interest, — if this difference mortified and stung him, — if every thing, as it is said, seemed uninteresting to a man who, from the twenty-third year of his age, had been uniformly engaged in scenes of political exertion, — if such be indeed the portrait of the fallen statesman, as presented by his biographer, *well* may it become those of you who hear me, those who are gifted with faculties according to the ordinary measure, and those of you who are intrusted with the yet higher privileges of superior talents, alike to consider how inestimable are those habits of literary occupation and of rational curiosity which are not only competent, under every change of fortune, to administer, even to men of common minds, the blessings of dignified activity and contented cheerfulness, but, when they are found united to the possession of great natural endowments, can accompany men in their fall, from the highest offices of the state to the obscurest depths of their retirement, and transfer a man like Bacon, though ruined and disgraced, from the cabinet of a prince to that high eminence and vantage-ground of philosophy and truth where kings from their humbler thrones might gaze upon him with reverence.

I must even venture to urge reflections of this nature still further; and without meaning for a moment to intrude upon the more sacred privacies of the character of Sir Robert Walpole, I cannot but take occasion from the facts, as they appear, to request you to consider how constantly exposed to concussions and to overthrow will assuredly be the happiness of every man who directs his thoughts *too exclusively* to the objects of ambition, — who, amid the business of mankind, may have habituated himself too much to disregard that still more important concern which yet awaits him, and, amid the interests

and anxieties of those who crowd around him for his patronage, has suffered himself to be hurried away and occupied till he becomes but too insensible of that yet more important connection which he is permitted to hold, not only with his fellow-creatures in this world, but with the Creator of the Universe himself, and which, when those crowds retire and his power is no more, when the more noisy and impetuous calls of duty are hushed, when the claims of mankind seem to part away from him on every side, will open at once to him an object of never-ceasing and even far superior anxiety and care, and leave him to the more exclusive and undisturbed enjoyment of that silent piety which should never have been banished from the meditations of his heart, and which, whether in health or in sickness, in his elevation or in his fall, will best explain to him the merits of his active life and the meaning of his earthly grandeur.

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## LECTURE XXVII.

1810.

LAW. — MISSISSIPPI SCHEME. — SOUTH-SEA BUBBLE, ETC.

DURING the period which we have been lately considering, a remarkable connection of amity and good offices took place between the two rival countries of England and France.

On the death of Louis the Fourteenth, the Duke of Orléans became, or rather made himself, regent; the Duke of Bourbon succeeded; then came Cardinal Fleury. It is the era which comprehends the administration of the three that must engage our attention.

The writers that we must read or consult are the following: the *Memoirs of the Duc de St. Simon*; the concluding volume of *Anquetil's "Louis XIV., sa Cour, et le Régent"*; *Memoirs of Duclos*; *L'Histoire of Lacretelle*. All these works may be read with ease and advantage; but any one of them may be sufficient for the era which it embraces. The topics are in all the same. *St. Simon* is the groundwork of all the rest, and *Duclos's* book is in its manner the most agreeable, and the most generally read: but the truth is, that the whole, in whatever author read, presents to the view little to occupy the philosophical reader of history. We have the intrigues of ministers and courtiers at home and abroad; a scene displayed lively



and striking, and even necessary to the comprehension of the history of Europe at that time. But we have no alterations in the constitution of France, and, indeed, little concern expressed on the subject. Even in those instances which are fitted to convey instruction to a statesman, the historians may be said to desert us: they write memoirs; they please and entertain us; but are either unable or unwilling to do more; and they enter into no minuteness of explanation, or criticism, on subjects that to posterity must surely appear of far more importance than those which they discuss.

Our own Charles the Second is made to revive in our memory in the person of the regent, the Duke of Orléans, and Clarendon in the virtuous and faithful St. Simon; but the regent is more outrageously debauched than Charles, and St. Simon, brought up in an arbitrary court, cannot have the views and feelings of Clarendon.

It may be observed, however, that the ill success of St. Simon, in his very laudable efforts to reform his master, is well fitted, in a moral point of view, to offer edifying lessons, if any were wanting, of the danger of self-indulgence, the fascination of bad habits, and, whatever we may think of the celebrated doctrines of free-will and necessity, of the impossibility which every man will find of altering his character at his pleasure; that is, the absurdity, in the first place, of indulging himself in courses of folly and vice, and of then supposing, that, whenever he thinks proper, he may begin to be virtuous and wise.

Very different was the fate of the regent. Favored by nature with superior gifts of fancy and of understanding, with no malignity in his disposition, and well calculated to receive the love and approbation of mankind, it was in vain that he often resolved to make some reasonable efforts to deserve both, — to exercise some self-control, — in a word, to be virtuous. He was bound down to the earth by the chains of his long established associations, — that is, in common language, by his bad habits. Dubois and his mistresses always prevailed over his better reason; and the kind and honorable counsels of St. Simon were sounds that were no sooner heard than they were swept away from the sense, or rather were never properly heard at all, amid the unholy revelry of his impieties and abominations. He died immaturely, of an apoplectic fit; for at last he could not exercise self-control sufficient even to take proper steps for the security of his own life, and his favorite medical attendant, Chirac, remonstrated with him, on this occasion, as vainly as had done before his virtuous counsellor, St. Simon.

“The most amiable of men in society,” says one of the historians; “full of genius, talents, courage, and humanity, but the worst of princes; that is, the most unfit to govern.” This is, however, too favorable a portrait of the regent; one more minute and exact is given by Lacretelle, and that with great force and beauty of coloring.

This is the prince to whom Pope alludes, —

“A godless regent tremble at a star.”

He was one of those licentious men who, as sometimes happens, believe nothing but what no one else believes, — for instance, astrology and magic ; and St. Simon mentions a recital given him by the regent, of some images shown him in a mirror descriptive of future events, which I cannot but confess are quite inexplicable. St. Simon had nothing to say, but to request him not to have any more communication with the powers of darkness.

On the subject of the Parliaments you must consult Duclos. It is an important subject, but one that, if you endeavour regularly to study it, you will find intolerably tedious, and at last but unsatisfactory. This resistance of the Parliaments at last grew to be formidable to the monarch, and at length ended in the late tremendous Revolution. The word Parliament must, therefore, be a most interesting word, whenever we can observe it in the memoirs or histories of France.

But the student, while adverting to the history of France, will at length be conducted to the financial schemes of the celebrated John Law ; and the appearance which this speculator and his projects make is well calculated to awaken our curiosity. Some of the particulars mentioned are of a ludicrous, others of a grave nature ; but they all indicate, and even if they were, some of them, exaggerated, the very existence of them, as anecdotes belonging to the times, would still indicate, a state of the public mind and of the country very highly deserving of our attention. I will mention some of them.

Law, from an obscure individual and a foreigner, had become the first man of consequence in such a kingdom as France. Voltaire says, that he saw him going through the gallery of the Palais Royal, followed by the first clergy and nobility of France, who were paying their court to him, — dukes and peers, marshals and bishops. Again, it was about Law that the English ambassador, Lord Stair, differed with his own court ; and the result was Lord Stair's recall. Of a less grave nature are anecdotes of the following kind : — that a woman of fashion contrived to have her carriage overturned, to take the chance of his running to her assistance, and affording her an opportunity of thus becoming acquainted with him ; — that another lady, finding all regular expedients vain, went with her chariot and servants, and set up a cry of fire near the house where he was dining. Again, such was the ferment and such the fury of speculation excited in Paris, that a poor man who had a hump-back made a livelihood by standing in the place where the bargains were made, and converting his infirmity into a sort of writing-desk. Anecdotes like these may be thought only entertaining ; but in another stage of Law's financial system, three men were, in the confusion and pressure of the crowd, actually killed.



Soon after the whole scheme had fallen into ruin, it happened that a conflagration had destroyed half the town of Rennes, and that Marseilles and part of Provence were visited by the plague. When the bishops of the different dioceses of France were exhorted by a circular letter from the regent to make efforts for the assistance of the sufferers, the Bishop of Castres replied,—"that all the efforts he could make had only produced one hundred pistoles in money, and five thousand livres in paper; that the inundation of this last sort of currency had done more mischief in his district than all the flames could have done in Bretagne; that it was of no consequence that the houses were not reduced to ashes, if there remained nothing of all that was necessary to their existence but what was fit only to be thrown into the fire. What revolution," continues the bishop, "has not been produced in six months by this paper money, in fortunes that appeared the best established! It is impossible to comprehend without seeing, or to see without the most lively sorrow, the effects that have taken place. There is an end with us to all commerce and labor, and confidence and industry; even friendship and charity are no more. These are not exaggerations," &c., &c.

Particulars like these are surely curious, when they appear on the face of history as the result of the philosophic speculations of an individual like Law,—one who had left his own country in search of a better, and was then brought forward to attempt his experiments in one of the first kingdoms in Europe. But all who hear me must be very conscious that finances, and paper money, and stockjobbing are sounds not unknown to ourselves; and it is very possible, that, if one of the purposes of history be instruction, these transactions may afford us some lessons not without their importance. We may consider ourselves, as a nation, very intelligent and experienced, but it must be noted that the regent who adopted the schemes of Law was a man of very brilliant talents. Law was, certainly, a person of no ordinary cast; and it does not necessarily follow, from the failure of his schemes, that he meant originally to deceive. The French people are inferior to none in quickness and sagacity; yet was there produced, on this occasion, in France, what Smith declares to be "the most extravagant project, both of banking and stockjobbing, that perhaps the world ever saw"; and it is certain that the most serious and extensive confusion and distress were the consequence.

Having made these observations with a hope of recommending these transactions to your attention, I now proceed to consider what means can be found for gratifying any curiosity which you may happen to entertain on the subject.

I am sorry to be obliged to confess to you some disappointments with respect to this point. I have not found it possible to comprehend what was the exact theory of Law, in his banking and Mississippi schemes, from any of the historical writers of France. This

projector and his projects are both mentioned by Voltaire, who lived at the time; but he gives no detail, and attempts no philosophic analysis, either of the system or its success. If we turn to the *Memoirs of St. Simon*, a contemporary also, he gives no assistance whatever. Duclos, in like manner, affords no proper information; nor does even Lacroix, though he has a chapter dedicated to the subject; nor do the writers of the French Encyclopædia. Adam Smith, unfortunately, gives no account of it, because, says he, "the different operations of this scheme are explained so fully, so clearly, and with so much order and distinctness, by Mr. Du Verney, in his *Examination of the Political Reflections upon Commerce and Finances of Mr. Dutot*," — a work which I have never been able to procure.

But we have another treatise, in our own language, on political economy, which, though eclipsed by the more enlightened and profound work of Smith, is still a work in many respects deserving of attention; it is particularly so on the present occasion; I allude to the book of Steuart, — *Steuart's Political Economy*. Steuart gives a regular account of the system of Law; and as the whole is concise, and yet, as I conceive, satisfactory, I not only recommend it to your study, but it is upon this book, I confess, that I depend for furnishing you with proper knowledge on the subject.

Law was a man of a contriving, speculating mind, one who had his fortune to make, and who, after in vain proposing his financial schemes to his own country, Scotland, and to other countries, at last settled in France, and succeeded in getting a bank established in Paris by the regent's authority, in May, 1716.

This bank seems to have been founded on the common principles, — circulating notes, and cash reserved to pay them, when occasionally presented. As he was a man of great address, with a fine person, and every attractive quality, both himself and his bank seem to have prospered most completely. No common success, however, could satisfy him; his ambition was unbounded. Unfortunately, too, he thought himself possessed of a secret for making a kingdom rich; and his dreams of personal aggrandizement were probably, therefore, of the most unlimited extent and splendor. His secret was this: — he held, that, by increasing the circulating medium of a country, you increased its prosperity, and that therefore you were to supersede the use of the precious metals, and issue paper money to any requisite extent.

Now it happened at the time, that the finances of France were in a most deplorable state of embarrassment; and it happened also, that the regent was a man of very quick talents, and alike fitted to comprehend and to be seduced by the reasonings and promises of any new and extraordinary system: Law and he were therefore made for each other. The finances were low, and Law had riches to bestow; this was all the regent wanted. Law was an insignificant in-



dividual, and the regent could furnish him with all the authority of government; this was all that Law wanted. Their operations were therefore soon begun.

In the first place, to Law's private bank was united, in September, 1717, a great commercial company, — the Mississippi Company, which was formed by subscriptions in the usual manner. And in the second place, on the first of January, 1719, Law's private bank, which had now flourished for three years, was converted into a royal bank.

But it will naturally be asked, What were the foundations of this new royal bank, and what of this Mississippi Company? What were the funds, and what was the security?

With respect to the new royal bank, its notes were always payable in money. The security must have been Law's personal security and the faith of the regent. And it was the great art and anxiety of this projector to make his bank-notes preferable to the coin of the country; so that, *though* coin *might* be legally demanded from him, in point of fact it never *would* be demanded from him. In this he greatly succeeded for a considerable time.

With respect to the Mississippi Company, they were to have an exclusive trade to Louisiana; they were to have the farming of the taxes, and other privileges, and therefore there appeared ample income for their dividends; and the profits of their trade might be considered as indefinite.

It was settled, that the shares of the company could be purchased only by bank-paper, not by coin. The more, therefore, the shares were wanted, the more were the bank-notes called for to purchase them. Law and the regent had the fabrication of both, — of the shares and of the bank-notes. Shares, therefore, were created, and notes were issued, to answer the demand of the public.

Every man seems to have supposed that the profits of Law's company were to be indefinite; all eyes were fixed, it must be supposed, upon Louisiana, and the revenue to be derived from farming the taxes and other privileges, resulting from his connection with the regent. It seems scarcely credible, but the fact was, that such was the rage for buying and selling shares, and for gambling in these concerns, that the counting and recounting of hard money would have been a process too tedious and slow; and even this circumstance gave a preference to the paper money, — to the bank-notes. The hopes and fears of the individuals concerned, and the various modes of managing the company's shares and the notes of the bank by Law, gave occasion to all that stockjobbing, and those strange occurrences, some of which I have alluded to, and which have been transmitted to us even in the records of history.

The system flourished while the public thought of nothing but of procuring the bank-notes with which to buy the shares. While this

was the case, Law could answer occasional demands on his bank in gold and silver, and the shares of the company kept continually rising.

Such was the state of things through the whole of the year 1719, till the end of November. But in the course of the preceding month of August, Law had promised a very large dividend on the shares of the Mississippi Company; he then increased the number of shares to an excessive degree. He also issued the bank-notes profusely; and continued to do so, till, before the end of May in the next year, 1720, he had, in fact, increased this issue to a most preposterous extent.

For some time it had been suspected by many, that the profits of the company could not be such as the holders of the shares had expected; that, therefore, there was no real foundation for the edifice that had been erected: the circulation, too, was overloaded by the paper issue. Early, therefore, in the year 1720, the whole system evidently tottered. From the first, the Parliament of Paris had constantly resisted Law, and all his schemes and operations. For some time it had been necessary to make use of the assistance of government forcibly to support his projects; and at last a false step that was made on the 21st of May, 1720, produced a run upon the bank, and, as he could not find gold and silver to pay his bank-notes, the whole system fell at once into disgrace and ruin.

It may be said, therefore, to have flourished from January, 1719, to the month of December; during that month, and the first months of 1720, to have declined; and to have expired at the end of May, 1720.

Such is the general description that may be offered of these transactions.

We may now, perhaps, enter a little into some particulars. Some questions occur. What could be the design of the regent, a very able man, in adopting this scheme? What were his ends? What did he suppose his means?

To these questions, the answer, according to Steuart, seems to be this:—The state was indebted two thousand millions of livres capital, at an interest of four per cent. His wish, therefore, was, to take advantage of the disposition the public were in to buy the shares of Law's trading company; to transfer the debts of the state from himself (the regent) to that company; to become *himself* a debtor to Law's company, and not to the public; to pay the company a *smaller* interest than he did the public creditors, and by this *difference* to relieve the state.

But the operation by which all this was to be effected was sadly circuitous; so it will appear to you, and scarcely intelligible. It was this:—The regent was, in the first place, to coin bank-notes at his royal bank, and with these was to buy the shares of the company; in this manner to keep up the price of those shares: the company were



then to lend him the bank-notes they had thus received, at a low interest; with these bank-notes he was to pay off the state creditors. After this process, he remained, it is true, with the shares in his hand; but these shares he was to sell to the public, and get rid of them: from the public he was to receive bank-notes once more, and, as these were the notes of his own bank, *these* he was to burn. And the result of the whole would then have been, that the public creditor would have stood with one of the company's shares in his hand, instead of one of his former claims on the state; and would have been left to find his interest, no longer from the regent, but from the dividends of the company. The regent, or the state, would in the mean time have remained debtors to the bank for the notes which the bank had lent, but would have had less interest to pay than before, — to say nothing of the gain which might have been made by a lucky sale of the shares; and these were the advantages which the regent, it is probable, expected.

The shares were therefore raised, in round numbers, during the early parts of the year 1719, from two hundred thousand to six hundred and twenty-four thousand. The bank-notes were coined during the whole of the year 1719, and more particularly during the earlier parts of 1720, till they mounted up from fifty-nine millions to nearly two thousand seven hundred millions of livres; and when the whole system failed, at the end of May, the regent was found holding four hundred thousand of the six hundred thousand Mississippi shares, and the public were in possession of (that is, there had been paid away) twenty-two hundred millions of the twenty-six hundred millions of bank-notes.

The whole scheme, therefore, failed; for the regent was answerable for these twenty-two hundred millions of bank-notes that were out, just as he had been before for the billets or debts of the state; and he had four hundred thousand shares in his hands, which he had not been able to dispose of. He could not get a sufficient number of the bank-notes back; he could not transfer the public debt from himself to the company, as he had hoped to do. In the event, therefore, after the run on the bank, and in the course of the remainder of the year 1720, he gave up the whole scheme; settled his accounts with the company by burning their shares, or their debt to him, and annihilating part of his own debt to them; and he returned to the old system of providing funds for paying the interest of the bank-bills outstanding, which were no longer to be negotiable, and to be destroyed at the end of the year. The result of the whole arrangement was, that he had to pay fifty-three millions for interest on the national debts, instead of eighty millions per annum, as he had before done; so that a certain advantage was gained; but himself and his administration were covered with disgrace, and his great agent and adviser, Law, narrowly escaped with his life.

Now, though these were the facts, and though such were the intentions of the regent and the meaning of the scheme, it does not follow that the regent, as has been sometimes thought, or even Law himself, meant to defraud the public. The regent must have conceived that he had furnished the company with a large revenue: first, by the interest which he was to pay them for their loan of bank-notes; secondly, by the exclusive advantages of trade, and, thirdly, by the advantages of farming the taxes, which he had allowed them. In this manner they appeared furnished with an income perfectly adequate to discharge the dividends on their shares. He and Law might both have persuaded themselves, that, by the paper system which they had introduced, they had so increased the wealth of the state, that the interest of money would and ought to fall, — and that he, therefore, as a debtor to the public, might, without injustice to the public, pay less interest than before. The only question is, whether improper arts and dishonest practices were used to raise the value of the shares, for on *their* sale all depended.

There is one fact extremely suspicious. In the middle of the year 1719, the year of the system, the company promised a dividend far disproportioned to any rational expectations that could be formed of their means. Why they did so has never been properly explained; and the company must be left with the imputation of, at least, most unpardonable delusion, if not of direct dishonesty. It was at this moment, it may be remarked, that the financial scheme we have mentioned from Steuart appears to have been brought into action. In August, the company obtained the general farming of the taxes from the regent; and while they promised this extraordinary dividend on their shares, they agreed to lend the regent one thousand six hundred millions at three per cent. Three hundred thousand shares were created in the next two months of September and October; and in December, 1719, and the first five months of 1720, two thousand millions of bank-notes were created; but in the last of these five months, in May, the bank stopped. All these facts connected seem to be best accounted for by the explanation of Steuart. The dividend was promised, which raised the value of the shares; a large number of shares were created to be purchased; and again, a large number of bank-notes were struck off and paid away to the public creditor, who was thus furnished with the means of buying the shares. All this runs smooth; but the question is, upon what grounds this large dividend was promised, — a question, it is to be feared, which neither Law nor the regent could have properly answered.

Lastly, with respect to the failure of the system. Steuart thinks that this failure was owing to the order given on May the 21st, that the bank-bill should go for only half its numerical value. He considers the credit of the bank as good, all through the months of January, 1720, February, &c., down to May. "The French nation," he



says, "had been accustomed to diminutions in the value of the coin ; by these they neither were nor could have been alarmed ; indeed, such depreciations of the coin had been always urged by Law and the adherents to his system, as arguments to show the superiority of paper. When, however, it was publicly declared that the paper money should be subject to diminutions too, contrary to the original terms of the bill, and the engagement with the public, — and when it was thus seen that the paper, which had no value in itself, could not even boast of the value to be derived from good faith, that is, was in fact left without any value at all, the consequence was sure to be what immediately took place, that the public would rush forward to get for it any value that could be found in silver or gold."

All this must, indeed, be allowed. The failure of the system was an inevitable consequence of such an edict as that of May. The question, however, that remains behind is, What could tempt or force the regent and Law to issue such an edict ? This must, I think, be accounted for, not by saying with Steuart, that it was a mere blunder, for it was an impossible blunder ; but by saying that it was an expedient which they had recourse to (a vain expedient, no doubt), for enabling their bank to struggle through the difficulties which are always the consequence of an over-issue of paper.

Law certainly had an idea that paper was fitter than the precious metals to become the money of a state ; and he had even thought that money, that is, in this instance, that paper, was wealth to a country, in the proper sense of the word *wealth*, — that is, was industry, trade, production, prosperity, in every meaning of these terms, because he thought it caused them. With these ideas he might have filled the imagination, if not betrayed the understanding, of the regent ; and both might have thought, that, in a country like France, a proper exercise of the authority of the state would carry them through all difficulties, till, at length, all the common prejudices on this subject of money being removed, the new medium might have its full circulation and influence, and the system be left, without any further interference of government, to stand on its own merits. The paper was therefore issued without fear, to an enormous extent.

But, in the mean time, the real nature of things could not be altered. It was not possible that the shares of the company should advance so high, and the public not begin to perceive that they had advanced beyond their value ; it was not possible that the paper money should be so increased in quantity, and the numerical prices of things not increase also, and that foreigners should not therefore bring their goods, receive for them paper, turn the paper into cash, and then carry the cash out of the kingdom ; it was not possible that the disappearance of the coin should not create alarm, notwithstanding the edicts of the regent, and the letters and reasonings of Law ; it was not possible that all annuitants should not find their stipulated

incomes less valuable, as the medium they were paid in became less valuable, that is, was more multiplied; it was not possible that the small part of every society, which may be called the sober reasoning part, should not be much struck with the sudden fortunes, the restless speculations, the extravagant enthusiasm, the violent agitation, that everywhere prevailed, — that they should not themselves doubt, and at last teach others to doubt, of the solidity of a system unphilosophic in itself, and which, after all, had to depend on the profits of a commercial company and the good faith of the regent. It was impossible, on these and other accounts, that gold and silver money should not at length be preferred to paper, of whatever promise or description; and the whole merit, and meaning, and success, of Law's system depended upon a contrary supposition, — the preference of the bank-paper to the precious metals. These are all consequences that were, and must ever remain, inevitable, when an excess of paper money has been, on whatever account, introduced into the circulation of a country; and the only real grounds of astonishment are, how the system existed so long, and how Law could succeed, in the manner he did, in persuading the public of the value of the company's shares and the solidity of the bank-notes.

On the whole, the failure of the scheme seems to have been owing to two great causes: first, a change of the public opinion with regard to the probable success of the mercantile project; and, secondly, to the over-issue of paper. While the demand for shares continued, the bank-notes were thus employed and absorbed, and though there might be a general excess of circulation visible in all the proper tests of an excess, still there might be no positive distinction made by the French people between notes and specie. But the moment the demand for shares ceased, the demand for notes ceased with it; and the distinction between the notes and specie immediately began to take place. The famous edict of May, which had been occasioned by circumstances like these, only brought on a crisis which was from the first, sooner or later, inevitable, and was sure to be, when it did take place, totally ungovernable.

This system has always been looked upon as a system of mere fraud, and Law as a mere projector and impostor. It has always been thought that the short account of the whole is, that he deceived the French nation, and that the only instruction to be derived from these transactions is, the disposition of the public to the folly and guilt of gambling and stockjobbing, the caution with which governments should listen to projectors, the hesitation with which the public or individuals should embark in schemes of wide extent and rapid profit.

Without meaning to controvert positions like these, the undeniable maxims of experience and good sense, it may be added, I conceive, that these transactions afford other lessons, not less valuable, though



not so obvious, -- I mean the circumspection with which the expedient of paper money should be used, -- the caution with which governments should listen to those whose systems proceed upon any other supposition, with respect to their paper issues, than that of their being freely and continually checked by the convertibility of the paper into the precious metals, -- the mistake which the public commit when they lend themselves to any systems of credit which require the slightest assistance from authority, which connect, in the way of mutual assistance, the great commercial and banking concerns of individuals with the government of a country and the finances of a state, -- the probability there is that men will outstep the proper bounds even of justice and honesty, much more of general prudence, when they can make, as they suppose, money at pleasure. It is lessons of this sort that ought also to be drawn from these transactions, because they are lessons of still greater importance to commercial nations, and because all such communities are far more likely to be ignorant and transgress in these points than in speculations and stockjobbing, not to say that the consequences are far more extensively and irretrievably ruinous.

The infatuation that was exhibited through the whole of the transactions in which Law was concerned was by no means confined to the French nation. By a coincidence singular enough, the year 1720 was marked in our own history by the folly of what was called the South-Sea Bubble. This subject I conceive also to be deserving of your consideration. I will make a few remarks, and leave it to your examination.

There is an account of it, as there is of the French Mississippi Scheme, in Anderson's History of Commerce; but you will better understand it by a reference to Coxe's History of Sir Robert Walpole. You may read his narrative and explanation in two chapters of the first volume, and then the letters from Mr. Thomas Brodrick in his second volume. The observations of Steuart, in his Political Economy, must by all means be referred to, and then Cobbett's Parliamentary History will do more than supply the rest. There are a few observations in Sinclair's History of the Revenue which should be read.

The South-Sea Company owed its origin to Harley. He incorporated the national creditors into a company; the debts due to them by the state became their stock, about ten millions; and he appropriated certain duties to the payment of their interest. He allured them into this arrangement by giving them an exclusive trade to the South Sea or the coast of Spanish America.

The South-Sea Bubble was but a preposterous extension, some years afterwards, and a sort of caricature, of the scheme and bargain now described. The debts of the nation were in the year 1719 at a greater than the current interest of the time; some of the debts were redeemable, that is, might be discharged by paying the principal;

others were irredeemable, or could not be paid off without the consent of the creditors. The scheme, therefore, of the ministers and the company was this — (I will express myself not in technical, but in the most popular terms I can find) : — That the company should have an exclusive trade to the South Sea, and therefore be enabled to get rich, and to pay large dividends on their shares ; that the national creditor should be thus induced to change his security, give up his claim on the public, and with it buy one of the company's shares ; the company were to pay a certain interest on their stock, besides the occasional profits on their shares, and the nation was to pay the company a certain sum to enable them to pay this interest and all expenses.

Of this arrangement the advantages to the nation were to be, that the whole debt, redeemable and irredeemable, was to be put into a new state, a redeemable state, — that is, a state in which it might be at length paid off ; and in the mean time, the interest paid was to be at a more easy rate than the original bargain admitted of. Another advantage was to be this : the nation was to receive from the South-Sea Company a *douceur* for allowing them to make this new bargain ; more than seven millions, for instance, were to be received.

The original national creditor was to have his advantage in becoming a proprietor of the South-Sea stock, and in sharing all the profits which were to result from the exclusive trade of the company, the management of their concerns, &c.

It is more difficult to understand what was in the mean time to be the advantage of the company itself. It was of this nature : — Government was to pay them five per cent. for seven years, at a time when money was not worth so much, and when, therefore, the company could not be under the necessity of paying so much to their own creditors, — the difference would be so much positive gain ; an allowance was to be made them for the management of the new stock which, in consequence of the bargain, was now to be added to their old original stock ; and, finally, great profits were expected to arise from their exclusive trade. Such were to be the advantages of the company. But it must be observed that the stock of the company was itself expected to rise ; and it did rise, so high, for instance, as to three hundred pounds per cent. ; that is, a person was to give the company three hundred pounds money before he could be rated a proprietor of one hundred pounds in their books, — that is, a holder of one hundred pounds stock. A national creditor, therefore, brought his claim for three hundred pounds on the nation to the company, and was in return constituted the owner of only one hundred pounds of their stock, — that is, the company accounted with him on the supposition of owing him only one hundred pounds ; but in the mean time they accounted with the nation as having paid off, on the part of the nation, a debt to their creditors of three hundred pounds : the difference was to be their profit, a difference that depended on the rate at which the South-Sea stock sold.



My hearers will now comprehend the manner in which the national creditor might give, in the progress of these transactions, not only his three hundred pounds national debt for one hundred pounds South-Sea stock, but his one thousand pounds national debt for one hundred pounds stock, if the stock ever rose, as in reality it did, to one thousand pounds per cent. ; and they will also see, if the stock did not afterwards pay him the interest which his one thousand pounds before had done, how he might be more or less injured ; and if the company's stock, for which he had paid his one thousand pounds, became worth little or nothing, how he might be entirely ruined, losing his national stock, and getting nothing in return. You will now also see what buying and selling might ensue, while the stock was varying, and how all the *later* holders, when the stock began to fall, would be the sufferers ; and again, that, if the *original* holders of the South-Sea stock (the directors and others) sold out stock while it was rising, they, and afterwards even those they sold to, might become rich ; and if they made use of any arts or deception to raise the stock, for the purpose of selling it, such as promising a great dividend, &c., &c., they then cheated those to whom they sold their stock.

The next point to be considered is this : the manner in which the bargain was made with the company by the nation, and the terms agreed upon. The ministers originally intended to give the South-Sea Company a good bargain ; it had even been settled that particular persons were to be considered as holders of stock beforehand. The stock, it was foreseen, would soon rise, and the holders were to receive the difference on the sale of it. If the stock did not rise, the whole was to be considered as a nullity ; and in this manner distinguished personages in the state were engaged to forward the scheme from the prospect of this probable advantage. This was the first piece of iniquity, and indeed the most striking, that was afterwards proved.

But, unfortunately, it happened, that, when the minister brought forward the plan in the House of Commons, having made his speech and been duly seconded, in the midst of a long pause, which he seems very unskilfully to have suffered to take place, Mr. Brodrick rose, and most unexpectedly proposed that the nation should offer the scheme to the Bank of England, as well as to the South-Sea Company, and have the benefit of the competition. The minister stood pale and puzzled, and it was found in vain to resist so equitable a proposition. The result was, that the two companies, the Bank and the South-Sea, proceeded to bid against each other, and the South-Sea Company at last succeeded, by undertaking the scheme on terms most preposterously disadvantageous to themselves, — disadvantageous to a degree that could not but cause the ruin of those who were ultimately to abide by them.

The present is a very remarkable instance of the manner in which

a competition may be sometimes carried to extremes. Sir Robert Walpole, who seems almost the only man left in possession of his understanding on this occasion, in vain remonstrated against the project, and declared the whole to be founded on mistake and delusion. Such proved to be the fact. The profits of the South-Sea trade never enabled the directors to pay such profits on the shares, that is, such dividends, as were expected. The value of the shares at last fell almost to nothing.

But, in the mean time, the first and most obvious lesson that is afforded by these transactions is, no doubt, the excess to which the passions of avarice and hope may be carried, the extraordinary effects of sympathy on large bodies of mankind, the inaccessible blindness in which the understanding may be left, when exposed to such powerful principles in our nature as these undoubtedly are. The whole scheme failed, because there neither was nor could be any trade to the South Sea, or to any sea, sufficient to pay adequate dividends on a stock purchased so dearly.

Among reasoners of a certain description, Swift and Mandeville, for instance, it is a very favorite fancy to throw mankind into two grand divisions, the knaves and the fools, on the right and on the left, — themselves, no doubt, standing at a due distance in the middle. On this particular occasion, Sir Robert Walpole and a few others might have been not a little justified in some sweeping arrangement of the kind; and there are particulars, appearing even on the face of history, which may afford the most captivating entertainment to all such reasoners as I have mentioned, the scoffers and satirists of mankind, the insulters and deriders of our imperfect nature.

In Anderson's History of Commerce, and in Cobbett's Parliamentary History, may be seen a long list of schemes which were offered to the public by different projectors, some of them ridiculous enough, and forming altogether a striking specimen of the nature of the times. Look at them; they will entertain, and ought to instruct you. I will mention one of them. A proposal, after many others, at last appeared "for carrying on an undertaking of great advantage, but nobody to know what it is." The scheme was for half a million, and every subscriber, upon *first* paying two guineas, as a deposit, was to have one hundred pounds per annum for every one hundred pounds subscribed. It was declared that in a month the particulars were to be laid open, and the remainder of the subscription money was then to be paid in. A more complete specimen of impudence than this can scarcely be conceived. It may be necessary to mention, that the projector actually received, in one forenoon, deposits for one thousand shares, — that is, he received two thousand guineas; but it cannot be necessary to add, that in the afternoon he moved off, and neither the guineas nor the projector were ever heard of more. It was probably on this occasion that one of those deriders whom I have



just alluded to amused himself with putting out an advertisement in one of the weekly prints (two or three sheets of the newspaper were then generally dedicated to the advertising of these projects), and the advertisement was to apprise the public that "at a certain place, on Tuesday next, books will be opened for a subscription of two millions, for the invention of melting down sawdust and chips, and casting them into clean deal boards without cracks or knots." — *Anderson*, III. 103.

There was one difference between the South-Sea Scheme and the Mississippi Scheme in France, which cannot but have been already observed by my hearers. In England there was no national bank connected with the project; the Bank of England stood aloof; there was no attempt to banish the precious metals from the currency of the country; the wealth of many individuals was left to rest, if they chose it, on paper and delusion, but it was not intended to enrich the country by the mere substitution of paper for gold and silver: an important difference, this, which resolves the whole of our South-Sea Bubble into a mere specimen of folly or fraud on the one part, and ignorance or ridiculous gambling on the other.

When it began to be seen that there neither were, as I have mentioned, nor could be, any profits arising from the South-Sea trade, or arising from any other source, sufficient to justify the rise of the stock, or to enable the company to pay the dividends which they had promised, their stock fell rapidly, notwithstanding every effort that could be made in its support; and all the silly people who had awaked from their dreams had no alternative but to vent their rage on their deceivers, and to call aloud for vengeance on the boundless ambition and avarice, as they called it, not of themselves, but of the directors and others, their agents and accomplices, the rogues, the parricides, (I quote the words made use of in a variety of different petitions to Parliament,) the traitorous, perfidious, &c., &c., betrayers, plunderers, robbers of their country, the monsters of pride and covetousness, the cannibals of 'Change Alley, who lick up the blood of the nation, &c., &c.

Now these are complimentary terms very natural for those to use who find themselves ruined by their own credulity; but as the law cannot well attempt to protect good people from the consequences of their own folly, it was not found possible, by any regular process of legal punishment, to pursue with due pains and penalties these nefarious contrivers of what, in the language of the committee of the House of Commons, was called "a train of the deepest villany and fraud that Hell" (that is, I suppose, the Stock Exchange) "ever contrived to ruin a nation." A scene, therefore, followed, not very creditable to a great and civilized nation. The houses of Parliament showed, no doubt, that they were not partners in these swindling transactions; but they showed, at the same time, a great disregard

to all the niceties that should be observed in the administration of penal justice. They made the directors bring in an account of their property and estates, talked over the different proportions of guilt that belonged to each individual, and then, in a loose and summary way, fined them at their pleasure, dedicating almost the whole of the two millions private property which they possessed to the assistance of the sufferers. "Instead of the calm solemnity of a judicial inquiry," says Mr. Gibbon, whose grandfather was a director, "the fortune and honor of three-and-thirty Englishmen were made the topic of hasty conversation, the sport of a lawless majority."

As an obvious and general remark, it must be mentioned that these popular tempests of vindictive justice should always be most carefully watched and resisted by intelligent men. But I must also remark, that there seems, on this occasion, to have been no notice taken of the guilt of a particular description of persons, who might little suspect their own criminality, — I mean a part of the members of the House of Commons themselves, more particularly the gay, thoughtless sons of peers or opulent commoners, who had undertaken to be legislators before they had made themselves men of business; who had given their votes, no doubt, for schemes of finance of the nature of which they probably knew nothing, and were contented to know nothing; and who had failed in their clear and bounden duty, the duty of being the honest, the laborious, and, I must add, the well-informed protectors of the public. The scheme would never have taken place, if the House of Commons had been properly intelligent, if it had been even intelligent enough to admit of being enlightened; but it was not. Sir Robert Walpole reasoned in vain.

I quit this subject by repeating briefly that Anderson's account is worth considering, but that a very good note by Steuart, in his *Political Economy*, must by no means be omitted. The narrative of Coxe, in his first volume, which is collected from every different source of information, will be the most intelligible and complete exhibition of the whole to the general reader; but the letters of Mr. Brodrick must be read, as containing the sentiments of a person living at the time, a member of the House, and making his observations on all that was passing within and without doors.

The *Parliamentary History of Cobbett* is very full on this occasion; all the regular documents are preserved and given; but there is so much technical language used, that they will often be tedious, and at the same time very difficult to comprehend. They must be read in conjunction with Steuart and Coxe, and, indeed, there is a good narrative furnished along with these debates, borrowed from Tindal; but the great misfortune is, that the speeches of Sir Robert Walpole are not come down to us, or at least not properly given. The most instructive portion of the whole would have been found in the speeches and reasonings that took place whilst the scheme was in agitation, —



while Sir Robert was remonstrating, for instance, against the acceptance of the proposals of the South-Sea Company; a general description only can be found of what was probably a most reasonable speech, highly creditable to him as a statesman. The introductory speech of the Chancellor of the Exchequer would have been also very instructive; and, again, the debates that ensued when the bubble burst, and the House was proceeding to punish the directors, and was endeavouring to rescue the nation from its calamities. But on these most important occasions the debates are all either more or less deficient, and the assistance that is afforded by the private letters produced by Coxe is quite trifling.

The first report of the proceedings of the South-Sea Company may be looked at. The result of the whole is contained in ten of the resolutions of the House of Commons, and will give some idea of the swindling practices that took place. The remaining documents soon become little more than an inquiry into the particular guilt of individuals, and to us, at this distance of time, lose their interest; but what minutes remain of the proceedings in the House are worthy of observation. The last two thirds of Mr. Aislabe's second defence before the Lords contains a curious account of the whole affair, and, whether Mr. Aislabe was or was not as reasonable as he pretends, gives a very just description of at least the follies of others. The manner in which the concerns of all parties were adjusted may be best understood from Anderson; and, in the first place, from the report of the address of the House itself, drawn up by Sir Robert.

Much loss must have been suffered by those who last entered into the scheme, and much dissatisfaction was expressed. All parties were made, very properly, to abide by the consequences of their folly. The seven millions, indeed, which the nation was to receive from the South-Sea Company were at length necessarily remitted, but the nation found its original engagements converted into new engagements of a more advantageous nature; and though the scheme was in every respect wretchedly managed, some advantage was derived from it, and the public creditors no longer received an interest disproportioned to the interest at which money could at the time be borrowed.

## LECTURE XXVIII.

GEORGE THE SECOND. — PELHAM. — REBELLION OF  
1745, ETC.

WE left the English history at the close of the administration of Sir Robert Walpole; the next era that I will propose to you is the interval between that event and the peace of 1763.

To this era we turn with some curiosity. We have heard much of the events by which it was distinguished, — much of the great statesmen and lawyers by whom it was adorned. The nation, in the mean time, as we may judge from the effect, must have made a great progress in its commerce, agriculture, manufactures, and literature, — in its general opulence and general intelligence. Of all these things we are somewhat eager to know the history.

But on this occasion we meet with a severe disappointment. We find the history written only by Smollett; and we learn, upon inquiry, that the work was drawn up as a Tory history (agreeably, however, to Smollett's principles), because a bookseller, in the exercise of his trade, had perceived that such a history would obtain a sale. Belsham's History is but short; and, though a work of more merit than is generally allowed, not written in a manner, even in these earlier volumes, sufficiently calm and dignified. The Annual Registers do not begin till the year 1758; and the London Magazine and Gentleman's Magazine comprehend some of the materials of history rather than a history itself. Above all, we have no authentic debates. In four volumes is comprised every thing of this kind that can now be offered to our notice. Under the feigned names of the Roman senate and the senate of Lilliput, some of the speeches of those who took a part in the debates were published in the London and Gentleman's Magazines; but at length even this imperfect and mutilated information was denied. The public were prevented from knowing the arguments and views of their statesmen, not only by order of the Lords, the hereditary protectors of the community, but by the Commons, the very representatives of the community; and there is for some time, in the debates of both Houses, a total chasm and blank. After all that we have heard of the eloquence of Murray and of Pitt, nothing can be more grievous than our disappointment in this part of our general inquiries.

I have already noticed to you the very strange ignorance of the real nature of this subject shown by the House of Commons on a former occasion, and even by such a man as Pulteney, while leader of the opposition. It is now better understood. And as, on the one



hand, every reasonable man will see that the houses of Parliament should always have the right of excluding strangers when they think fit, so, on the other, it is equally clear that this right should be exercised as seldom as possible, — by no means so often as men of violent and arbitrary dispositions would think desirable. You who hear me will, I trust, if any of you should ever sit in Parliament, be very careful how you interfere with the publicity of the debates, — in other words, how you presume to assassinate the talents of your country, stifle the free spirit of its constitution, and destroy the instruction of after ages.

On the whole, it will appear, from all the particulars I have mentioned, that we have no very good means of appreciating what I may call the fair, open, regular politics of the country. We must judge, as well as we can, from the events that took place, the measures carried by the different administrations, the general characters of those that composed them.

We are allowed a slight glance into another part of the general subject, — the intrigues and cabals of the times. The Diary of Dodington, Lord Melcombe, has been published. It is generally amusing, and sometimes important: amusing, because it gives some idea of the way in which public men of more talents than principle usually reason and act, and of the way, too, in which they are treated by ministers and those who want their services at the cheapest rate; important, because it gives some idea of Mr. Pelham, the Duke of Newcastle, and other distinguished men of the times, and, above all, because it affords the only insight we can as yet obtain into the education and manners of his present Majesty when young, as well as into the characters of those who were around him, his tutors and governors, his friend the Earl of Bute, Prince Frederic his father, and the princess dowager. The public can seldom reach any knowledge of this peculiar kind. Those who are usually about a court are unfit to make any proper use of their advantages, and indeed they seldom try. The slightest particulars, therefore, are eagerly seized and meditated upon by every philosophic reader of history; and this book of Dodington must by no means be neglected.

With Dodington may be read a book that has been lately published by Lord Holland, — the *Memoirs of Lord Waldegrave*, from the year 1754 to 1758. The book is very deserving of perusal, as it affords us the observations of a very sensible man on the occurrences that passed before his eyes, while in the confidence of George the Second, and the governor of the late king. It somewhat disappoints the reader, for more might have been expected than is found on the subject of the young prince, the princess dowager, and Lord Bute, (though valuable hints are given,) and on the political principles of Pitt, Mr. Fox, and others; but the book must be read, and will be read, as well as the preface and the letters of Mr. Fox (after-

wards Lord Holland), with entertainment and instruction. Characters are given, and well drawn; the style is very easy, clear, and idiomatic, — the style of a polished man, rather than of a scholar, accustomed to the company of people of rank and talents. The general conclusion from the whole is very unfavorable to all the statesmen concerned: that they contended rather for power than for the prevalence of any political principles; that they constituted factions in the state, rather than parties: great constitutional principles were, however, sometimes at issue, though apparently not felt and considered to be such at the time. Lord Waldegrave himself seems to have had no very enlarged or proper ideas of our constitution, — to have been a man with no political views himself, and attributing none to other people. I conclude my notice of this work by observing, that a mistake may be made with regard to the princess dowager. She was entitled to the affection and respect of the young prince, the future king, as his mother. The question is, whether she was or was not converting her maternal influence into a means of political power, and whether she was or was not ambitious to rule by the assistance of Lord Bute, and rule on Tory principles.

But to return to the point of history at which we set out. — The labors of Mr. Coxe do not exactly close with the Life of Sir Robert Walpole. He has also published memoirs of Sir Robert's brother, the first Horace Walpole; and it is to these we must have recourse when we first turn to the era which we are more immediately considering.

I will now proceed to advert to some of the more particular occurrences of this interval from 1743 to 1763, in the order in which they appeared.

In the first place, I have already mentioned, and must again mention, the intrigues that took place on the fall of Sir Robert. They are worth your consideration. A general notion of them may be formed from Coxe's Life of Sir Robert, — favorable to him, no doubt; but the fact seems to be, that all the parties concerned in these transactions had their follies and their faults, — the public, perhaps, the least so; but even the public was not without them, as will be seen when we are considering those of their statesmen.

Pulteney, for instance, seems to have made, when in opposition, a very improper declaration that he would never take office. A public man may certainly propose himself as a sort of inquisitor of all other public men; but on one supposition, that he takes no favors from any administration: this is a necessary proviso. He then may occupy a very elevated situation, and deserve and obtain the applauses of his country; for this is a sort of merit that is very great, and is intelligible. But men of talents, as well as good sense and honesty, may even more materially contribute to the service of their country by going into office, and advancing its interests, foreign and domestic,



civil and religious, — by becoming such ministers as the latter (the men of honesty and good sense) may safely patronize. This is a merit of a still higher nature ; and for a virtuous and intelligent statesman to exclude it from his view is, in fact, to abandon the government of a country to every presumptuous, self-interested man that will undertake it. Pulteney, however, seems to have attempted to adhere, when power was within his reach, to the ill-judged declarations which he had made when in opposition ; and when it was his business to form an administration, he seems to have entertained the unreasonable expectation, that he could still keep his consequence without being seen in any one responsible situation or post, — not in opposition, — not in office, — not even as a neutral critic, — but merely as a commoner made into a peer, — placed calmly to survey the proceedings of the administration he had constructed, without any means of influencing their movements, — without any duty to discharge to the public, — that is, in other words, without any right to receive their praises.

What was the result ? He had scarcely finished his negotiations with the court when he found, too late, that he had attempted impossibilities. He was almost insulted with his insignificance, even by the Duke of Newcastle. He was so mortified as to have meditated a renewal of his opposition. This, indeed, would have crowned his mistakes ; and he is said, in the agonies of his shame and disgust, to have trampled the patent of his peerage under his feet.

The most edifying part of these transactions is the view which Pulteney had himself formed of his plans and situation. "If," says he, "avarice, ambition, or the desire of power had influenced me, why did I not take (and no one can deny but I might have had) the greatest post in the kingdom ? But I contented myself with the honest pride of having subdued the great author of corruption ; retired with a peerage, which I had three times at different periods of my life refused ; and left the government to be conducted by those who had more inclination than I had to be concerned in it. I should have been happy, if I could have united an administration capable of carrying on the government with ability, economy, and honor."

Public men are not to indulge themselves in dreams like these : they are not to suppose that they subdue a bad minister, or a set of bad men, unless they do their best to form a better administration, — unless they hazard their own characters and embark their own labors in a new system : bad ministers and bad measures are not so readily cleared away and disposed of. Pulteney knew very well, no one could know better, the discordant materials of which the opposition had been composed ; and it was his business, as the great leader and soul of the whole, by disinterestedness, openness, and an adherence to the great constitutional points for which he had contended, to unite as many of them as possible, and to make no bargain with the court

that could leave the reasonable part of the public any cause of complaint.

On all occasions like these, great difficulties must be experienced. The jealousies, suspicions, and rivalships by which a party is secretly agitated, while openly united in opposition to a minister, break out when the victory is once accomplished. The leaders cannot possibly satisfy, or even silence, the preposterous expectations, more particularly of those who have little real merit to boast. But Pulteney seems not even to have done what might have been expected. He left the court in possession of the important offices in the cabinet. The Duke of Newcastle was to be secretary of state; Lord Hardwicke remained chancellor; Lord Wilmington was suffered to slide, as it was called, into the post of first lord of the treasury; and the result of the whole was, that the alteration of measures, as well as of men, for which he had before appeared so anxious, never did, and, indeed, never could, take place; for how were the measures to be altered but with the men?

Melancholy to his own personal feelings were the consequences. Every term of reproach and indignation, all that could be suggested by the agreeable pleasantry of Sir Hanbury Williams and the more elevated effusions of the muse of Akenside, was levelled at his character and fame; and the hissings of the public everywhere pursued the peer, the new-made peer, who was now thought but the tool of a court, corrupted and corrupting, though so late the patriot who had animated his countrymen by his generous efforts against the baseness of corruption, and charmed the House of Commons by the liveliness of his retorts and the vigor of his arguments.

There can be no doubt that Pulteney was not so deserving of reprobation as was supposed at the time, or long after. In this, and in all other cases, we are to take the most natural solution of the phenomena; and in judging of the conduct of men in difficult and critical situations, it is quite idle to exclude the supposition of occasional folly and mistake. Pulteney seems himself to have meditated a defence, and to have afterwards devolved the task and pointed out the proper materials to his friend, Dr. Douglas, the truly venerable Bishop of Salisbury. But, on his death, General Pulteney, for reasons that can scarcely have been sufficient, destroyed all his papers, as if the conduct of distinguished men were not, in fact, the property of the public, — their example, if good, — their warning, if criminal or mistaken; finally, as if silence was not an indirect confession of a bad cause.

The fault of the court in these transactions seems to have been a want of generosity, and even of common gratitude, to their protector, — to Pulteney. The objects of the court were, to disunite the opposition, to form an administration on the Whig basis, and to save Sir Robert Walpole from a public impeachment, if possible, — at all



events, to save his life. In the last two Pulteney was quite ready to agree with them. He was himself a Whig, and loved the constitution founded on Whig principles. He was not, he said, "a man of blood"; and had always meant, by the destruction of the minister, "the destruction of his power, not of his person." But, alas for human weakness! he had an unfortunate wish for a peerage, a still more unfortunate dislike to office. These circumstances placed him sufficiently within the power of the court; and as there was, therefore, no need of either duping or deceiving him, or of representing him as duped or deceived, why was the Duke of Newcastle to insult him? What need for the king to break his word with him in the affair of Sir John Hynde Cotton?

All this was a species of conduct in the court, not only ungenerous, but, as is always the case, unwise as it was ungenerous. Courts seem on such occasions to justify the reproaches of their enemies, and to teach mankind that every negotiation with them is to be a mere contest of intrigue and trick, of baseness and cunning; so that men of openness and honor are to suppose them unfit to be dealt with, and unsafe to be approached. Nothing can be more unfortunate for the country, and for the court itself, than that notions like these should ever appear to be countenanced by facts.

The public, lastly, were not without their blame on this occasion. Their faults were their natural faults, — violence, precipitation, unreasonableness. They overlooked, in the first place, the merits of Sir Robert; considered not the difficulties of his situation; that he had to support the Brunswick family on the throne; that he had done so; that he might not be without his faults, but that at least this was his merit, and one with which no other could be put in competition; that, with Jacobites and Tories to oppose him, — many who would have dethroned the Hanover family, more who would have suffered it to be dethroned, — he was not merely left to depend on the intelligence and purity of his measures, but obliged to fight his battle by the natural influence of the posts and places which belong to our establishments, and which he was to distribute among the great families of the country, so as to throw a weight of influence in one scale, to be opposed to disaffection in the other.

This is delicate ground on which I am now treading, — this ground of the influence of posts and places, and even of positive money, according to the custom of those times, offered and received. I am well aware of it. But the era of which I am speaking was one which cannot be brought into comparison with any other; and, in this situation of things, to suppose, as the public did, that Walpole was to answer with his life for what they supposed his malpractices, — to imagine that he was the great author of all ill, and that patriotism and purity waited only the signal of his fall to rise into splendor, and to receive universal homage, — for the public to suppose all this was

surely to be, as I have already intimated, violent, precipitate, and unreasonable; in other words, was, according to their measure and opportunity, to have their follies and faults as well as their rulers.

A further insight into these curious transactions, which, the more they could be known, the more edifying they would be, cannot now be obtained. We have the known facts, the debates, and the pages of Mr. Coxe, drawn up after consideration of such private papers as now exist. Mr. Walpole (Sir Robert's brother), it appears, destroyed all the papers of the minister. "As the enemies of Sir Robert Walpole seemed desirous," says Mr. Coxe, "to impute to him alone all the measures pursued during his continuance in office, apprehensions were justly entertained lest orders should be issued by the committee of secrecy for seizing the papers, not only of the minister himself, but even those of his brother. . . . Accordingly Mr. Walpole went down to Wolterton, and burned numerous papers, particularly a great part of the private correspondence between himself and his brother." It is to this Life of Mr. Walpole, afterwards Lord Walpole, by Coxe, that I must continually refer you, in conjunction with the common histories.

Lord Carteret next appears on the stage, — a man of genius and ambition. He soon became a great favorite with the king; and he had talents that could throw a splendor round any measures that he proposed or defended.

You may begin with this twenty-fourth chapter of Coxe's Walpole; and you will receive much entertainment and information on subjects that belong to this period: the divisions of the cabinet; the relative abilities and political views of the leading men, particularly of Lord Carteret on the one side, and of the Pelhams on the other.

On the whole, however, the scene displayed through these chapters is not very pleasing. The Pelhams overpowered Lord Carteret, who had the favor of the king; but their system of politics turned out to be too nearly the same with his. At this period, the great point that could alone divide the opinions of patriotic and intelligent men was our system of Continental interference. George the Second, as it may be supposed, thought chiefly of Hanover, and was ready to push the system to any extreme. Lord Carteret, a daring, ambitious, able minister, was ready to indulge him in all his plans and prejudices. Had the Pelhams resolved to adopt different views, the contest would *then* have been one of a grave, interesting, constitutional nature, — one in which it would have been very fit that both the monarch and his favorite should have found themselves unable to proceed, from a want of the assistance of the House of Commons and of the public. But though Mr. Pelham had himself very reasonable opinions on the subject of the Continent, very different from those of Lord Carteret, he was obliged, or induced, to give way to his brother,



the Duke of Newcastle, who had been, in like manner, obliged or induced to give way to the king. The king, therefore, after all, prevailed. The result was, and the only result, that a Hanover system of politics was carried on by the king and the Pelhams, and not by the king and Lord Carteret: that is, the government was in the hands of ministers more constitutional and more reasonable for the management of home politics, but less fitted to engage with effect in the politics of Europe.

The peace of Aix-la-Chapelle at last took place. It is well described by Mr. Coxe, page 359. "The terms of the treaty of Aix-la-Chapelle," says he, "were highly favorable to the maritime powers, as France relinquished all her conquests in the Low Countries, for the restitution of Cape Breton. The house of Austria was alone dissatisfied with the dismemberment of Silesia and the country of Glatz, which was guarantied to the king of Prussia, with the loss of Parma and Placentia, which were settled on Don Philip, and the cession of some districts in the Milanese to the king of Sardinia.

"Thus, after an immense expense of blood and treasure, ended a war in which Great Britain and France gained nothing but the experience of each other's strength and power. France perceived the riches and perseverance of Great Britain to be much greater than she had imagined; and Great Britain became sensible, that the power of France, acting in the Low Countries and in her own neighbourhood against so despicable a barrier as was then opposed, was irresistible. The commercial disputes between Spain and Great Britain in the West Indies — the great object of the war — seemed to have been relinquished, and only specified in the treaty for form's sake; while each of these nations, though mutually weakened, found themselves in the same condition as before the war. The sober and sensible part of the English began to speak with reverence of Sir Robert Walpole's pacific administration; and those who had been his greatest enemies seemed at a loss to account for the reasons why the war had been undertaken."

You will see reason, I think, to assent to these representations of Mr. Coxe.

As we proceed in the subsequent chapters of his work, similar intrigues for power continue to appear. Frederic, then Prince of Wales, the father of the present king, had his party in opposition to the court; and though Pelham, Fox, Pitt, and Murray were ranged under the banners of administration, the prince's party was clearly gaining ground when he unexpectedly died in 1751. The want of proper elevation of understanding and sentiment in the Duke of Newcastle gave endless scope to the jealousies and intrigues of the different leaders of different parties; and when Mr. Pelham, the effective minister, died in 1754, a new scene was opened of contest between Fox, afterwards Lord Holland, and Pitt, afterwards Lord

Chatham. Pitt was, however, too magnanimous and able, to please either the Duke of Newcastle or the king. Fox, who loved money, though profuse and dissolute in his youth, was, on the whole, a better courtier, and being less worthy of success, obtained it.

These times cannot now be more easily or better understood than by reading these chapters of Coxe. Other particulars will be found besides those I have alluded to: that Mr. Pitt, for instance, never spoke the invective against Horace Walpole which is attributed to him; that the kingdom, from want of vigor in the cabinet, had a narrow escape from Marshal Saxe and a French invasion; that the *Life of Lord Chatham*, as published some years ago, is superficial and inaccurate, drawn from newspapers and party pamphlets, interspersed with a few anecdotes communicated in desultory conversations by Earl Temple.

Particulars of this kind may be found in the text and in the notes of this work, — this *Life of Lord Walpole*. The great wish of Lord Walpole seems to have been, to persuade the English king and ministry to form a strict alliance with Prussia. He labored the point by every effort in his power, private conversation, and a written memoir. He seems not to have sufficiently appreciated the difficulty of combining Austria and Prussia in a common system of politics; nor the improbability of bringing forward, with success, any power but the house of Austria to oppose the monarchy of France.

The Walpoles, however, must be thought right in the main point of their politics, — their endeavouring to persuade Maria Theresa to yield to the injustice of the king of Prussia at first, the better to enable them to make a combination for her against the power of France, which was evidently become a most formidable enemy to the liberties both of Germany and of Europe. They were also right in another point, — that any contest with France would certainly be followed by another contest on English ground, for the crown of these realms, — that is, by an invasion from the Pretender. Sir Robert Walpole lived to see his long and constant prediction just fulfilling.

On the whole, the proper system of foreign politics was sufficiently plain: that France was becoming too strong; that Prussia was interested in the Germanic liberties, and might have been prevailed upon to be at least neutral; and that Austria, as the natural enemy of France, was to be brought forward in open opposition. But Hanover, not England, and not Europe, was unfortunately the object, — the great point at all events to be secured. Foreign expenses and engagements, to an endless extent, and of an inextricable nature, were the consequence; a consequence that must be considered as the price which the nation paid for the establishment of her civil and religious liberties, and the establishment of the Brunswick family on the throne, on the principles of the Revolution in 1688.

As another object deserving your attention, may be mentioned the



Rebellion of 1745. You will see the history of it in Smollett. It has been professedly treated by Home, the author of the beautiful tragedy of Douglas. It is also noticed by Lacretelle; and it is always amusing to observe what foreigners say of us. Smollett, himself a Scotchman, was deeply affected by the cruelties that are generally understood to have followed the defeat of the Highlanders at Culloden. This seems the most material point of difference between his account and that of Home, who passes over this part of his subject in silence, very improperly; for it is on occasions like these that history should exercise its awful censure, if blame has been incurred; and as the charge has been made, it should have been either confirmed or refuted. It is not very promising to see a history of the Rebellion in 1745 dedicated to the reigning sovereign; and the silence of Home must be considered as an indirect acknowledgment that the severities exercised on this occasion were more than were necessary, and therefore such as deserve reprobation. The cause of humanity must not be violated, even by those who have been hazarding their lives in the defence of the free government of England, — still less by those who are sitting in its cabinets.

Since I last read this lecture, a book has been published, — *Memoirs of the Rebellion of 1745*, by the Chevalier Johnstone, who was aid-de-camp to Lord George Murray, and assistant aid-de-camp to Prince Charles. It should be looked at, particularly the introduction, which is sensible and important. The notes are always good. The great impressions left on the mind of the reader are, that the rebellion was in reality more formidable than he may have supposed, the cruelties of the Duke of Cumberland and of his agents more disgraceful. The author endeavours also to persuade his readers, but I think in vain, that the battle of Culloden was less decisive, and the talents and character of Prince Charles more totally unworthy of the enterprise, than he may have imagined. The last half of the book is occupied with the author's adventures and efforts to escape; they are often curious, and sometimes descriptive of manners. The author ends his memoir in something like despair, at the approach of old age and beggary. The manuscript was originally in the Scotch College, and is now at Longman's. It is not very flattering to our national character to be obliged to conclude from the Stuart Papers, now in possession of his Majesty, that so large a part of the English aristocracy invited the prince into England, — that much the same conclusion may be drawn from the Culloden Papers lately published, in 1815. This is noticed in a note to the present work. But these are particulars not to be forgotten, when we are considering the merits and demerits of the Whigs of the last century, and of Sir Robert Walpole; those, too, of their opponents, — the Tory and Jacobite leaders, — Shippen, Sir William Wyndham, Lord Bolingbroke, and even of Pulteney.

I have now again another postscript to add to my lecture ; for, many years after writing what I have just now delivered, I have just seen an article in the Quarterly Review, of June, 1827, on Mr. Mackenzie's edition of the Works of Home, as I understand, by Walter Scott. I am such an idolater of this extraordinary writer, that nothing can be so gratifying to me as to perceive that the representations thus made are abundantly strengthened and confirmed by every thing he says. The article cannot be as gratifying to you as it has been to me ; but it has a reference to other literary characters, as well as to Home, and you will find it, in every respect, very entertaining.

The work of Home was not entirely such as might have been expected from one who was not only an actor in the scene, but the author of a tragedy like Douglas, elegant enough to have pleased on the French stage, and yet affecting enough to succeed on ours. The History of the Rebellion was a work which had been meditated so long, that it was delivered to the world too late, — when the writer was no longer what he once was. But I recommend it to your perusal, because it has all the marks of authenticity, — possesses, I think, more merit than is generally supposed, — treats of a very remarkable event in our history, — and is, after all, entertaining, and not long.

I do not now detain you with the narrative of this enterprise, which even in the history will not occupy you for many pages. The points of it are shortly these : — The Pretender landed almost alone in one of the desolate parts of Scotland ; with difficulty got a few chiefs to join him ; obtained possession of the town, though not of the castle, of Edinburgh ; defeated one royal army that came to dislodge him ; pushed on to what he considered the disaffected parts of England, the northern counties ; shaped his course for the capital, and actually reached Derby in his way to it. His followers, or rather some of the leaders, then despaired of the enterprise, and forced him to retreat. When he had returned to Scotland, a second royal army was defeated at Falkirk ; and at length, in April, 1746, about nine months after his first landing, his Highlanders were regularly encountered at Culloden. They were first sustained in their attack, and afterwards chased from the field by the veteran troops of the Duke of Cumberland. The Pretender then became a fugitive, and was hunted from place to place ; and though a reward of thirty thousand pounds, in a manner not very worthy of an English cabinet, had been set on his head, and though he was transferred from the care of one Highlander to another, during several weeks, not a man could be found among these hardy children of tempests and poverty, these magnanimous outcasts of government and nature, base and unmanly enough either to assassinate or to betray. He at length made his way to France, like his ancestor, Charles the Second, after sufferings and escapes almost incredible.



There are parts of this story which you will find very interesting in Home: — the commencement of the enterprise; the transactions that took place at Edinburgh while the rebels were approaching; the intended night attack previous to the battle of Culloden. Some disappointment is, however, experienced by the reader, when he comes to the adventures of Charles after his final defeat. They are not given either in a very clear or very interesting manner. There are a few papers in the appendix which make some amends.

But there are some particular topics connected with this enterprise which I could wish you would make the subject of your reflections. For instance, — who, and what could be the men who could thus crowd in a moment around the descendant of James the Second, defeat a body of regular troops, throw England into confusion, and march within a hundred miles of the metropolis? These Highlanders ought surely to appear to the student a very extraordinary description of men; they certainly were so. Some account of them is given by Home, and of late a more full and regular account by Mrs. Grant. From this work, or even the critique on it in the *Edinburgh Review*,\* and from the *History of Home*, you will be able to explain to yourselves the singular political problem (for such it is) to which I am now endeavouring to direct your future consideration.

I will allude to a circumstance or two. When Charles first reached the Highlands, in a small ship, with no other means than a few muskets and about four thousand pounds in money, and proposed to some of the chiefs to march to England and dethrone George the Second, heroic as were their natural sentiments, they resolutely declined all share in so wild an undertaking. Charles talked to two of them who had come on board his vessel; he persuaded, argued, and explained; and as he walked backwards and forwards on the deck, he was overheard by a Highlander, who had come on board with his leader, and who had no sooner gathered from the discourse that the stranger was the Prince of Wales, and that the chief and his brother refused to take arms, than his color went and came, his eyes sparkled, he shifted his place, he grasped his sword. “And will not *you* assist me?” said Charles, who had observed him. “I will, I will,” said Ranald; “though no other man in the Highlands should draw a sword, I am ready to die for you.” “I only wish that all the Highlanders were like you,” said Charles. Without further deliberation, the chief and the brother, the two Macdonalds, declared that they also would join, and use their utmost endeavours to engage their countrymen to come forward in his cause.

Now such was the first extraordinary step in this extraordinary enterprise. Another remained. Lochiel, then the head of the powerful clan of the Camerons, was yet to be gained over. He was

\* *Edinburgh Review* for August, 1811. — N.

coming to Charles to give his reasons for not joining him, — reasons, as he had told his brother, which admitted of no reply. “But that is of no consequence,” said his wiser brother. He was, no doubt, very right; they certainly admitted of no reply, and had received none when urged to the prince. But as the conference was closing, Charles, in his despair, declared that he would erect the royal standard even with the few friends he had; proclaim to the people of Britain that Charles Stuart was come over to claim the crown of his ancestors, — to win it, or perish in the attempt. “You, Lochiel,” said he, “who my father has often told me was our firmest friend, — you, Lochiel, may stay at home, and learn from the newspapers the fate of your prince.” “No,” said Lochiel, “I will share the fate of my prince, and so shall every man over whom nature or fortune has given me any power.” It is a point agreed amongst the Highlanders, that, if Lochiel had persisted in his refusal to take up arms, the other chiefs would not have joined the standard of Charles, and the spark of rebellion must have instantly expired.

Such were the chances and turns of elevated sentiment on which this enterprise depended; such were the grounds on which these bands of brothers were to descend from their mountains, at every step they took incur the penalties of treason and death, lift up their eyes and gaze unappalled on the colossal power of England! — never pause for a moment to contrast the simple target and claymore of Scotland with her mighty lance and ægis, — the artillery at her feet, and her fleets in the distance; but at all events precipitate themselves forward, and ask from their chief no question but — “Was it his will?” and from their prince no signal but — “Did he lead?”

It may be doubted whether the history of the world ever exhibited a stronger instance of the triumph of heroic sentiment over the calmer suggestions of reason. But when our first impression of surprise and indeed of admiration is passed away, we must look upon this as a very striking instance to prove the indispensable necessity of the general diffusion of political knowledge among all ranks and descriptions of men. A mistake was now made merely from the want of political knowledge; and on this account, and on no other, brave men were to perish in the field, and the great cause of civil and religious liberty was to be endangered to the utmost, — the cause of the Revolution of 1688, the cause of England and of mankind, — and endangered by the most noble and generous of men. I say, endangered to the utmost; for had the northern parts of England been as magnanimous in sentiment as they, too, were mistaken in opinion, — had they been, like the Highlanders, not only ignorant and misled in their political notions, but generous and fearless in their characters, it is scarcely too much to affirm that the Rebellion of 1745 would have been successful, the Brunswick family would have been driven from our land, and freedom would have lost her boast (a boast so cheering to a philo-



sophic mind), that she, too, had placed a monarch on a throne, and, in England at least, was had in honor in palaces and courts. The sentiment on which the Stuart family had to depend, from the first, was merely an over-statement of an acknowledged principle in political science, the principle of hereditary right. It was this sentiment, and this alone, that now armed the clans of Scotland in their cause, and so prejudiced Wales and the northern counties of England in their favor.

I will not insult, as some seem ready to do, the memory of these heroes of the Highlands (for such they were) by supposing that either plunder or power was their object; far higher and more noble were the feelings of their hearts. It was loyalty to the chief in the follower, — it was loyalty to the prince in the chief, — it was in *all* the indefeasible nature, as they supposed, of hereditary right, that made the cause of Charles Stuart, in their opinion, the good cause and the true, whatever might be its issue, however discountenanced and abandoned by the timeserving sycophants of the Lowlands and of the South.

“The king shall have his own again,”

was the language of the popular ballads of the time. The same sentiment has been caught by the poet of Caledonia, in his Chevalier's Lament: —

“His right are these hills, and his right are these valleys,  
Where the wild beasts find shelter, but I can find none.”

It is impossible not to respect men who could thus devote themselves, from principle, to an unprotected adventurer like Charles. It may be useful for us to meditate upon these examples of elevated sentiment, that we may catch a portion for our own hearts of the divine flame which we are admiring. But we must be admonished, at the same time, by examples like these, that heroism in the sentiment, and generosity in the feeling, are not *alone* sufficient; that these are the lights which, “though lights from heaven, *may* lead astray”; that principles, however elevated, must be properly estimated, their bounds ascertained, their value compared with that of other principles; and, in a word, that sentiment alone must not actuate the man, till it has *first* been shown its course and taught its limits by the superintending power of the understanding.

What spectacle was ever seen like that before us? The children of poetry, gallantry, and song, of hardiness and courage, of courteousness and truth, rushing from the free air and simple pleasures of their mountains, to fight the battles of — what? — of arbitrary power! to bleed in defence of — whom? — of the representatives of civil and religious tyranny! to perish, and for what end? — that they might destroy the fair fabric of the constitution of England!

It pleased a Higher Power, in his overruling mercies to these kingdoms, to order it otherwise, — to decree that they should *not* succeed. They paid the forfeit of their delusions and mistakes: they lay slaughtered on the plain of Culloden; they were hunted down by their conquerors amid their native wilds; they perished, and their cause has perished with them. So perish the memory of their faults! Their high and noble qualities survive, for they have descended to their countrymen, the heroes of our own days, the heroes who carry terror into the legions of France, and who have at length found a cause where the Muse of History may tell their achievements without a blush, and record their virtues without a sigh.

When we reflect on the character of these inhabitants of the Highlands, it is not very agreeable to observe the want of prospective wisdom that was shown by our English cabinets. The exiled family of the Stuarts had belonged to Scotland; there had been a rebellion in their favor in 1715; and it was always the maxim of Sir Robert Walpole, that on the event of a French war another would take place. Was no effort, therefore, made by the legislature to counteract this disposition of the Highlanders to insurrection? Could nothing have been attempted? Could not their generous and active qualities have been converted to the benefit, as they had been to the injury, of the state? A mechanic requires a fulcrum, an artist a rude material; he asks no more; his ingenuity and labor are to do the rest. Were there, therefore, in the character of the Highlanders no opportunities for the science of a statesman, — no fulcrum, and no rude material?

These are questions that should occupy your thoughts while you read the events of this rebellion; and before you consider what might have been done, I will mention what really was done, in the way of legislative provision.

The Highland clans, you will observe, were not all disaffected: far from it. There were Whig as well as Jacobite clans. The government of George the First issued out its orders, therefore, to disarm the Highlanders. This is always a very favorite measure of lazy and arbitrary, and, I may add, ignorant legislators. They seize the arms, and leave the hearts of a people to be seized by others. But what was the result? The common one, — that the well-affected gave up their arms at the time appointed, and the rest concealed them, or took some subsequent opportunity of providing themselves afresh.

At last, Duncan Forbes, the president of the Court of Session, seeing a war with Spain approaching, and aware of the consequences, in the autumn of the year 1738 (more than twenty years after the first rebellion) proposed that government should raise four or five regiments in the Highlands, appoint an English or Scotch officer of undoubted loyalty to be colonel of each regiment, and name all the other officers from a list which he gave in, and which comprehended



all the chiefs and chieftains of the disaffected clans. He had no doubt, he said, that these men would serve well against the enemy abroad, and even, in fact, be hostages for the good behaviour of their relations at home.

That this, at least, should have been one of the expedients resorted to long before is sufficiently obvious; but what was the event? Sir Robert Walpole said it was the most sensible plan he had seen, summoned a cabinet council, laid it before them, recommended it strongly, — and then, what was the difficulty? Why, every other member of the cabinet was against it, because opposition, they said, would exclaim that Sir Robert Walpole was raising an army of Highlanders to join the standing army and enslave the people of England. The plan was, therefore, laid aside, and Sir Robert, and probably the cabinet, with the fear of a rebellion constantly before their eyes, did nothing. They had done nothing for twenty years before, when any expedients of the kind might have been tried with a good grace and with a proper chance of success.

“What impolicy!” we cry, and justly. But this is not a field in which our English statesmen, at least our English cabinets, have much displayed their legislative wisdom. More than a thousand years before the Revolution of 1688, the Romans could contrive that “the Barbarians should consume their dangerous valor in the service of the state.” No policy so obvious; and though it was abused by the later emperors of Rome, in a very extraordinary state of the world, to their injury, none so easy to be modified and properly adapted to the circumstances of any critical case; yet no hint either of ancient or modern policy seems ever to have reached our legislators. Lord Chatham, who, with all his faults, had that elevation in the character of his mind without which no minister can ever be great, made it his boast (and it was an honest boast) that he had been the first to take advantage of the noble qualities of the Scottish nation. “I was the first minister,” said he, “who looked for merit, and found it in the mountains of the North. I called it forth, and drew into your service a hardy and intrepid race of men, — men who, when left by your jealousy, became a prey to the artifices of your enemies, and had gone nigh to overturn the state, in the war before the last.” His example stands alone. Nothing is ever done by cabinets in the way of conciliation or timely and prospective wisdom; they live upon expedients, and provide only for the day that is going over them.

But, before I conclude this lecture, I would wish you to cast one glance more on this remarkable rebellion. I would wish you to consider once more the character of the Highlanders, and the romantic nature of this enterprise in its commencement and progress, and then turn to the melancholy contrast exhibited by the people of England at this singular crisis. I do not say that associations were not form-

ed, — that volunteers were not collecting, — that the nobility and gentry were not in alarm and in motion. But what is, on the whole, the simple fact, as it has been stated with his usual point and acuteness by Mr. Gibbon? That Charles and his followers marched into the heart of the kingdom without either being joined by their friends or opposed by their enemies.

But how, it may be asked, could such a strange fact as this take place? From national apathy, or disaffection, or pusillanimity? Whence could it arise? The first answer to this question must be, that the nobility, gentry, and yeomanry of the country were not prepared for an inroad of this kind; they had not been taught by their rulers to expect it, nor directed to learn the use of arms, and accustomed themselves to military exercises.

But what need, it will be replied, of the use of arms and military exercises? Why did not the country rise, as one man, to beat back invaders that were as insulting from their numbers as their designs? Four or five thousand men marching against the people of England, to give away their crown and destroy their civil and religious liberties! This question, after all, can best be answered by the comparison of the English and Highland character at the time. The Highland character had remained the same; but the English character had been materially altered by the influence of commerce and manufactures, and half a century of peace and prosperity. There was intelligence, literature, industry, affluence, civilization, in England; but there was no ardor of sentiment, as in Scotland, — no visions of the imagination, no traditional poetry, and no national music, — no spirits in the mountains, and the ghosts of no heroes in the clouds, — no poverty that walked erect and familiar into the castle and the hall, — no links of genealogy that united the hovel and the palace. Little had been heard of these things in England during the last century, though much had been heard of the value of estates, of the balance of trade, and of profit and loss.

I speak not to depreciate the labors of the manufacturer, the value of commerce, or the progressive blessings of successful industry in the towns or in the country; but I certainly do speak in order to represent to you, that, as I have before observed how necessary is the frequent exercise of the understanding to save men from the delusions of their feelings, so I must now observe, with no less anxiety, how necessary is the influence of sentiment as well as reason, of the elevated sensibilities as well as the prudent dispositions of the mind, to the perfection of the human character, more particularly of the human character when found in any highly commercial and manufacturing and prosperous community; that, without these sensibilities, wisdom and science may be of no avail to the individuals of a great nation, and their opulence be wrested from them and be only an incitement to the enterprise of their invaders; that the romance of



sentiment, as it would be thought on the Royal Exchange of London, must not be banished from the land, lest the land should perish as Holland has done, surrounded with the images of its commerce and its wealth, but no longer the Holland where Philip and the Spanish infantry were defied, and Louis and the armies of France successfully resisted. You will easily trace out, on the one hand, the various and inestimable blessings which result from commerce and manufactures, from the successful exertions of industry, and the increasing opulence and independence of the inferior orders of the community; but you will easily see, on the other hand, that the virtue of personal courage, and all the high qualities that belong to the character, not merely of the soldier, but even of the patriot, have a tendency to decline in a nation as it advances in its commerce and manufactures, as it makes, in short, greater progress in the science of affluence, — that is, as those men everywhere multiply and spread themselves who are more exclusively occupied in the mere pursuit of gain.

How the sentiment may still be kept high in the community, while men of this, I admit, very useful description are everywhere increasing in their numbers and influence, — how these men are themselves to be properly elevated in their minds, while they are so exclusively occupied with their bargains and their markets, the article they are to produce, and the price they are to receive, — how this can be effected, I may not have here any leisure to inquire; but I may at least say this, that it cannot be done by pressing hard on the democratic parts of the constitution, or that it cannot be done by preventing the education of the lower orders. I should rather say that it can be done only by means exactly the reverse: by keeping the poor man as enlightened, that is, as susceptible of a sense of duty and generous feelings, as the nature of his imperfect condition will allow; and by accustoming every man to interest himself, and by calling him out to interest himself, in the concerns of his country, — that is, to think as highly of his own political importance as the peace of that country, as the safety and respectability of the executive power, will possibly admit.

Supposing you now to pass on from this rebellion in 1745, you will reach the peace in 1748, then arrive at a delicious period of tranquillity that intervened for seven short years, and thus at last be conducted to the great war which was raging when his present Majesty, George the Third, ascended the throne. This war was concluded by the peace of 1763.

On the subjects of these wars, their causes and their events, you will find information in the common histories of the times. I have already insisted, perhaps to a degree of tediousness, on the principles by which questions of this nature ought to be judged, — “*Justa bella quibus necessaria.*” It remains but to observe that the question of the proper boundaries of the French and English settlements in North

America was not accurately determined, when it might have been, at the peace of Aix-la-Chapelle in 1748, and that the subsequent war was marked by those successes which must for ever attest the heroism of which the inhabitants of these islands can be made capable, and attest, at the same time, the genius of that great minister, the first Mr. Pitt, who was called by the people, rather than by the monarch, to draw forth the energies of his country.

And now it must be further observed, that this was the very people who had suffered the Highlanders to march to the centre of their kingdom to give away their empire to the Stuarts; that afterwards without a murmur suffered a secretary of state, Mr. Henry Fox, to bring over Hessians and Hanoverians for their defence; and that gave occasion to Dr. Brown, in his *Estimate of the Times*, to represent them as degraded and lost in effeminacy and luxury. At the summons, however, of Mr. Pitt, they started from their trance, such is the importance of the government of a country, and they shamed the secretary who had insulted, and confuted the author who had libelled them; they did so by defeating their enemies in every quarter of the world. The truth is, that ministers like the first Mr. Fox, and writers like Dr. Brown, were not fit, the one to call forth the powers of a great civilized nation, or the other to estimate its character.

They who rail against the luxury of the times are in fact declaiming against the growing prosperity of the country. The most refined of men may be the most brave, — they generally are so. It was not by luxuries that the Roman and Grecian empires fell, as has been commonly supposed; but by defects in their civil polity, and by the gradual and consequent decay of that spirit of freedom which, when it existed unimpaired, preserved them safe from every invader. Luxuries are not fatal to a people, but as the possession of them supposes a large mass of the community employed in furnishing them by their industry, — that is, employed in the pursuit of gain, and therefore exposed to great debasement in their natural sentiments, and the loss of their military spirit. But if this debasement be counteracted by such expedients as I have mentioned, by diffusing as widely as possible the benefits of education, and by keeping the constitution of the country as free as the security of society will allow, that is, by giving every man some interest in his own character, some feeling of personal duty, and some sense of political consequence and right, then assuredly it will follow that never will there be wanting to that community men of high sentiments and military spirit, those who are to lead and those who are to follow, not merely to the defence of their native land, but to every enterprise that can be pointed out to them of honorable danger.

These are, however, subjects which may not be entirely without their difficulty either in theory or in practice; but of their importance



it is needless to speak. I have at least presented them to your curiosity, and offered my own view of them, and I proceed to other matters. You will find some sensible observations respecting them in the fourth volume of Millar; and finally, the defence of our island by the resident natives of it, its industrious and commercial population, has much occupied the Parliamentary debates of our own times.

Having thus noticed the national wars before and during the administration of Mr. Pitt, I must leave you to read the events in the regular histories. The different hopes and fears, and the various emotions of mortification or triumph, by which the public were agitated, will be best seen in the magazines of the time; and the events and leading particulars from the year 1758, in the Annual Register. I do not longer detain you with allusions to enterprises and successes which can never cease to be interesting to the reasonable pride as well as natural curiosity of every English reader.

Such are the more obvious topics to which the history of this era will lead you: the intrigues of different parties on the fall of Sir Robert, and afterwards; the Rebellion of 1745; the two great wars; the peace in 1748, and the peace in 1763.

We have Coxe, Dodington, Lord Waldegrave; we have the common magazines and the histories to refer to; from the year 1758, the Annual Register. But I have already intimated, that, when we look for Parliamentary debates, our mortification is extreme. No names so great as those of Lord Hardwicke, Lord Talbot, Lord Mansfield, Mr. Pitt. The latter commanded by his eloquence the attention of the House of Commons, the affections of his countrymen; and at last that eloquence enabled him, according to the phrase then current, to take the cabinet by storm. Yet it is not till all these wonders had been accomplished, and till the breaking out of the disputes with America, that the debates afford us any adequate specimens to enable us to comprehend his extraordinary powers. Of the silver-tongued Murray there is still less. But in the course of the four volumes of Debrett's Debates from the year 1743 to 1768, a few speeches and imperfect debates appear, which should be read not only on account of the speakers, but the subjects: the debate on Lord Hardwicke's clause to be added to the Treason Bill, in 1745; the corresponding debate in the Commons, more particularly a debate in the Commons on a motion for annual Parliaments, in January, 1745, which was lost by a majority of only thirty-two, — namely, one hundred and forty-five to one hundred and thirteen; Lord Hardwicke's speech on his Bill for abolishing the Heritable Jurisdictions in Scotland; debates on the Mutiny Bills; the reasons that were urged for the Bill to naturalize Foreign Protestants; the discussions that arose on the subject of a national militia; on the Marriage Act; the debate on the Jew Bill, and on its repeal; the debate, or rather Mr. Pitt's speech,

on the peace of 1763 ; the proceedings in the case of Wilkes ; the motion and debate on general warrants. These are parts of Debrett's four volumes that will more particularly furnish you with general principles and materials for reflection. The legislature, on the whole, seems to have been growing more liberal and tolerant as the century advanced ; the public to have been far behind them.

Of the Pelham administration less can now be known than could have been expected. The best account of their measures and views may be collected from Smollett, who was at least a contemporary historian and a man of talents. With some slight exceptions, they always showed themselves friendly to the principles of mild government. They were tolerant, peaceful, prudent ; they had the merit of respecting public opinion ; and though they were not fitted to advance the prosperity of their country by any exertions of political genius, they were not blind to such opportunities as fairly presented themselves. They were quietists, but meant well ; they were disinterested, did good service to the house of Hanover, and their administration is honorably remembered ; but Mr. Pelham unfortunately died in 1754, and the duke, his brother, was deprived of his assistance when it was more than ever indispensable to him. The scene was becoming stormy, and great difficulties were to be encountered ; the duke, therefore, and his adherents gave way to Mr. Pitt, and very properly assisted with their votes the minister who disdained their counsels.

The administration of this minister of the people, the first Mr. Pitt, is now known only by the conquests which he either achieved or planned. What passed in the houses of Parliament has not come down to us ; it was probably of little importance. Opposition was silenced not only by a sort of union of parties, but by the popularity of Mr. Pitt and the successes of the war. The secretary, as it has been said, with one hand wielded the democracy of England, and with the other smote the house of Bourbon. The monarch himself, George the Second, seems at last to have become a convert to his merits, and to have joined, however late, in the applauses of the public. The monarch, however, George the Second, died ; and this great minister, on the accession of his present Majesty, George the Third, to the throne, soon felt the ground, as he said, tottering under him. On the first opportunity he was displaced, and Europe, that had seen only two successful war ministers during the century, Marlborough and Mr. Pitt, alike in their fame, and alike in their fall, must have thought that in our extraordinary island the surest method of losing office was to display the talents that deserve it, and that, to fill St. James's with murmurs and dissatisfaction, it was necessary only to make the world resound with the triumphs of our arms.

The lecture that you have just heard was written more than twenty years ago, with such assistance as was then within my reach ; but I can now refer the student to more ample information, which has lately



appeared, chiefly derived from the indefatigable labors of the late Archdeacon Coxe, to whom all readers of history are so deeply indebted. In the year 1829 were published his *Memoirs of the Pelham Administration*, a posthumous work, drawn up under circumstances which add a sentiment of melancholy tenderness to the respectful gratitude with which this most valuable writer must ever be regarded. Such sentiments will be confirmed by a very sensible article in the *Quarterly Review* for October, 1833, where the merits of the author and the man are properly stated, neither of which, as it has always struck me while I have been a reader of history, were sufficiently estimated by the public.

I have now, then, only to refer the student to the work I have just mentioned, and to request that he will depend on this regular and authentic account of an important period in our annals, while he wishes to know not only the transactions that belong to it, but the characters of the ministers and Parliamentary leaders by whom it was distinguished. In no other way can he derive a proper idea of the merits of Mr. Pelham, Lord Hardwicke, and, above all, of the Duke of Newcastle, whose vanity and some defects of character exposed him to the ridicule of wits and satirists, and have hitherto obscured (but need no longer obscure) his real merits both as a statesman and a man. He was neither without his talents nor his virtues, as the public at present suppose.

I must guard you against the historical publications of the celebrated Horace Walpole. Look for entertainment in them, if you please, and you will not be disappointed; but give him not your confidence: indeed, you will soon see, from his lively and epigrammatic style of invective, that he cannot deserve it.

Finally, I must mention to you that a very full and entertaining account of the Rebellion in 1745 was drawn up by Mr. Chambers, of Edinburgh, and now makes two very interesting volumes in *Constable's Miscellany*.

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## LECTURE XXIX.

### PRUSSIA AND MARIA THERESA.

WE have been now long occupied with the English history. I did not wish to break through the different links by which the different parts are connected together; but in the mean time we have entirely turned away from the Continent, and even from France. To the

French history I will advert immediately; but in the mean time I will call your attention to the Continent. While reading the works of Mr. Coxe, you will have been continually summoned away in this manner, and I can no longer forbear adopting the same course. The truth is, that our progress has long since brought us within the view of a personage so celebrated during the last half-century, that for the present I must leave the histories both of France and of England, and I must endeavour to furnish you with proper materials for the appreciation of the striking events with which he was connected, and of his own very extraordinary talents and character; I allude to the king of Prussia.

I must in the first place observe, that, as France and England were actively engaged in hostilities with each other, as they took a part in the politics of Europe, and were connected with the great wars in which the king of Prussia was engaged, some general view must be obtained of those hostilities and of those politics, that their relation to the measures of this military sovereign may be understood. As a preparative, therefore, to this subject of Prussia, I must propose some short general history; and I therefore mention, as adequate to this particular purpose, the History of Belsham, — his reign of George the Second.

With respect to the king of Prussia, the great features of his life are, — 1st, his invasion of the territories of the young Queen Maria Theresa, on the death of the emperor, her father; 2dly, the Seven Years' War; 3dly, the partition of Poland. It is to the two former, that I shall at present allude, as the latter belongs to times of a more recent date than I shall be able, as yet, to approach.

In considering the subjects of history, I have always made it my business, first, to inquire for works in our own language, — those being the most likely to be placed within your reach. I have therefore to mention, that a view of the reign of Frederic has been published by Dr. Gillies; another by Dr. Towers; a short account is given of Frederic by Dr. Johnson; and we have *Memoirs of the Court of Berlin*, by Wraxall. Of each in its order.

The work of Dr. Gillies I can in no respect admire. There appear some good observations about the king's military genius, and there are some incidents mentioned of a general nature, which I do not observe in other English works. On the whole, I can recommend it to the student only when he wishes to learn what can be said in the praise or defence of Frederic. Gillies appears to me only a warm panegyrist, and on this occasion neither an historian nor a philosopher.

Before I proceed to other English or any foreign works on this subject, I must observe, that the following appear to me the points to which the student must more particularly attend, in considering the merits of Frederic: — 1st, The justice, or injustice, of his original attack on Silesia. This very valuable province he wrested from the



house of Austria, taking advantage of the unprepared situation of the young queen, Maria Theresa, on her first accession to the throne. This was an injury and an outrage which could never be forgiven by her; and if this was an act of ambition, and if to this all his subsequent contests with Austria may be traced, it is *he* who is responsible for all the calamities that ensued. 2dly, Frederic endeavoured, by the interference of his personal vigilance and wisdom, to nourish the prosperity and advance the happiness of his subjects. His measures and his success form, therefore, the next division of the subject. 3dly, Frederic was a man of wit and literature; and we can never, in considering the character of this monarch, forget his personal qualities. What, therefore, was Frederic to his scholars and men of science whom he called around him? and what to his generals and companions in arms? This is the third division of the subject. And such are the points which must be always kept in mind by those who read the history of Frederic. He was one of the sovereigns of Europe, and a great military hero; he endeavoured to be the father of his people; lastly, he was a man of talents, fond of society, and disposed to be a patron of the wits and philosophers of his age.

All these points, and the character and merits of Frederic in every respect, appear to me to be well understood and represented by Dr. Towers; a writer who has, like Gillies, undertaken to give the English public an account of the life and reign of this renowned monarch. He has fulfilled the promise which he gives in his preface, and he has not been induced, by the splendor which surrounded his hero, to vindicate his actions when they were repugnant to justice and humanity. He has given references to authorities, which Gillies has very improperly omitted; and it will be found that every topic of importance connected with this extraordinary character is touched upon. Proper diligence has been exerted, and reasonable observations are made; so that the work may be recommended as giving a correct general idea of all that there is to be known, and as pointing out to the reader the proper sources of more minute inquiry. The book may not be written with any peculiar strength or ability, but it is unaffected and sensible, sufficiently concise, and adequate, I conceive, to all its purposes. The great events are detailed; the campaigns described; anecdotes given of the king, and the great military characters that surrounded him; and the reader is dismissed with an impression very favorable to the talents, at least, of Frederic, as a commander of armies, and as a prince placed at the head of an arbitrary monarchy, but not favorable to him in other respects.

To this impression, as far as it is favorable, little will, I think, be added by further inquiries into other books. It was with the king as with the image in Nebuchadnezzar's vision, — to borrow the compliment of Voltaire to Turgot, when in the gout, — “the head was of gold, but every other part of a very inferior quality.” Something,

therefore, may be subtracted from the general impression left by Towers. We may learn that the king's policy was not always enlightened, and that his talents, eminent as they were, did not save him from the mistakes of the times in which he lived. But it is impossible from Towers, or from any book or treatise, to learn how to regard Frederic with any sentiments of kindness. He is often great, but never amiable, — perhaps with the single exception of his behaviour to his friend and favorite philosopher, Jordan.

There is a short account of Frederic by Dr. Johnson, which was first printed in the *Literary Magazine*, in the year 1756, and is therefore only a fragment. It should be read, because whatever Dr. Johnson writes must necessarily entertain and instruct. It is written with the usual decision and vigor of his biographical compositions; but it was never continued, and was probably not a work of much deliberation or labor.

Coxe's *House of Austria* must be diligently read, to understand the politics of Frederic's opponents; but of this work I shall speak more hereafter.

When other books, English and foreign, have been read, the two volumes of *Wraxall* may be looked at, — the *Memoirs of the Court of Berlin*. They will be found very entertaining, and they will sometimes amplify, and sometimes revive, the views and opinions respecting Frederic, and subjects connected with him, which the student may have collected from prior reading.

Such are, I think, our English authors; I must now advert to the writings of the Continent. I shall confine myself to three authors, — Thiébauld, the king of Prussia himself, and Mirabeau.

And first, with respect to the five octavo volumes of Thiébauld. You will see an account of the work in the *Edinburgh Review* for October, 1805. Thiébauld was a man of letters, sent to Frederic from Paris, at his desire. Having read the work myself, and first put down my own observations, I afterwards found most of them confirmed by the *Review*, and very few that had not been there anticipated. Occurring, therefore, to two different minds, they are probably the observations that naturally arise out of the subject. There is a slight passage or two in which the reviewer, who is always most at ease when he is severe, appears to me to have indulged his particular genius a little too far. For instance; there is no need of supposing that Frederic did not feel most sensibly, in the common import of the words, the execution of his friend De Catt. But, on the whole, I subscribe sufficiently to the sentiments and opinions which the reviewer has delivered respecting Frederic, and recommend them to your attention. I must even depend on your reading this *Edinburgh Review* for October, 1805; my lecture will otherwise want one of its component parts.

It is very natural to wish to see the interior of the life and char-



acter of any of those personages who are distinguished in history. It is on this account that Thiébault's volumes should be consulted. A very fair portion of this sort of information is given by Dr. Towers; but those who wish for more must read Thiébault. His Recollections, indeed, as he calls them, seldom rise to the dignity of history; but they are always agreeable, often instructive, occasionally very interesting. In the first volume we have a good representation, not only of the king, his talents, his opinions on every subject, his conduct to those around him, but of Thiébault himself. A general estimate of the merits of Frederic concludes the volume, which is on the whole the best of the five, — the first. It should by all means be read: it will be read with great pleasure. On the whole, therefore, the first volume, and several parts of each succeeding volume, will either occupy or instruct the reader very agreeably.

Frederic is, however, himself an author, and the student will scarcely be excused, if he does not read those parts of his works that are of an historic nature.

The most curious point to observe, in these productions of the king, is the deceitfulness of the human heart. The king talks of the rage for conquest, the folly of ambition, the waste of human life, as if he had not been himself one of the most striking specimens of this sort of atrocious character that appear in history.

But his account of his campaigns should be looked at. Though too cold and formal, it is concise, striking, rapid, — the work, as well of a statesman and of a man of letters, as of an accomplished warrior, — and therefore deserving, in different parts, the attention, not only of military men, but of all who hope to distinguish themselves on the theatre of the world. I had made large references to them, but omit them from want of time.

I now proceed to another view of his character. Frederic, having tried the powers of his genius in laying waste the labors of man and in diminishing the population of his provinces, was next seen to undertake a task more difficult, one in which the leaders of armies and cabinets have not hitherto been equally successful, — the task of nourishing the industry, increasing the numbers, and raising up the prosperity and happiness of those they govern. In this enterprise, however, as in the other, the king seems to have exerted himself with his usual energy and activity; and we are bound to consider, as far as we are able, the movements of his mind, as we before did of his armies, — the wisdom of his counsels, when his ambition had taken the right direction, and was occupied in laboring to create, not destroy. To many, this part of the general subject may not be so entertaining as those I have hitherto mentioned; but students must endeavour to instruct themselves as well as search for their amusement; and by those who would deserve the high character of statesmen or men of reflection, such portions of reading must be sought for rather than avoided.

It happens that a work was composed and entirely dedicated to this division of our subject by Mirabeau, the celebrated Mirabeau of the French Revolution. As he was the son of the marquis who is so distinguished amongst the French economists, it was natural for him, while resident at Berlin, to turn his attention to the situation of Prussia, and to the efforts which the king had made for the reëstablishment and furtherance of the prosperity of his dominions. The monarch had, in fact, labored to this effect, but rather after his own particular manner, as one used to threaten and command, as a monarch rather than as a philosopher; and therefore the work of Mirabeau, which is drawn up according to the principles of the modern system of political economy, is generally occupied in finding fault. But it is interesting and valuable, even from its very nature, — even from the circumstance of its being a critique, by a disciple of the new school of political economy, on the labors of a statesman of the very highest natural talents, proceeding upon the principles of the old. It may be said, indeed, that we cannot now follow the author of this work through all the laborious investigations which he exhibits. This may be admitted; but when proper allowance has been made for this consideration, abundant matter will remain to which no such objection can be offered, and quite sufficient to satisfy the reader even in those particulars in which the representations of Mirabeau cannot now be examined. When the results at which he arrives are such as might, on general grounds, be expected, it seems unnecessary to hesitate about their propriety, or to deny him his conclusions.

The work of Mirabeau (Mirabeau on the Prussian Monarchy) embraces every topic that can excite your curiosity or need occupy your reflection with respect to Prussia or its monarch, its agriculture, its commerce, its military system, the efforts of the king on these subjects, and on its laws, its systems of education, and many others. Mirabeau, while criticizing the labors of Frederic, naturally throws out his own opinions on all the important concerns that can interest a statesman; and as a study for a statesman and a political philosopher, I recommend it to your attention. You cannot expect to accede to the views of a man of licentious, daring mind like this, but you may consider his work as a study, as a lesson in political science. Many observations are made in these volumes respecting the nature and strength of the Prussian and Austrian monarchies, that might have taught some most useful lessons to our own ministers and to those of our allies at a subsequent period, during the late great revolutionary wars with France.

The first book, at least, of Mirabeau's work may be read, and the general conclusion or summary of the whole. The general impression from these two will be, that the work is the work of a statesman, and deserves the study of a statesman, and the student may then determine whether he will or will not consult the intermediate volumes.



I have drawn up a lecture on this work of Mirabeau, but omit it, for it would be tedious to some and unnecessary to others. The Notebook on the table may, however, be consulted.

But to form a proper estimate of the character of Frederic and of this period of history, it is necessary that the student should acquaint himself with the situation and merits of his great political opponent, Maria Theresa. It is in this manner only that the real odiousness of Frederic can be at all understood; and a more disgusting picture of what is called the ambition of princes cannot be easily pointed out than was exhibited in the conduct of this celebrated monarch; at a moment, too, when he himself had just begun to reign; when he was himself only about the age of thirty, and when the queen was young, in the full possession of every female attraction, and summoned, amidst all the inexperience of three-and-twenty, without a counsellor of ability near her, to undertake the administration of the dominions of the house of Austria.

A very sufficient idea may be formed of this very interesting part of the general subject by a reference to the work of Mr. Coxe. The subject may be considered as opening\* in the sixteenth chapter, about the close of the life of the emperor Charles the Sixth, the father of Maria Theresa. An account is given of the situation of the European powers; and in the seventeenth chapter, of the young king of Prussia, and of his father, Frederic William, with the death of the emperor. In the eighteenth chapter, Maria Theresa ascends the throne of her ancestors, — possessed, it seems, of a commanding figure, (I quote the words of Mr. Coxe from different paragraphs,) great beauty, animation and sweetness of countenance, a pleasing tone of voice, fascinating manners, and uniting feminine grace with a strength of understanding and an intrepidity above her sex. But her treasury contained only one hundred thousand florins, and these claimed by the empress dowager; her army, exclusive of the troops in Italy and the Low Countries, did not amount to thirty thousand effective men; a scarcity of provisions and great discontent existed in the capital; rumors were circulated that the government was dissolved, that the Elector of Brunswick was hourly expected to take possession of the Austrian territories; apprehensions were entertained of the distant provinces, — that the Hungarians, supported by the Turks, might revive the elective monarchy; different claimants on the Austrian succession were expected to arise; besides, the Elector of Bavaria, the Elector of Cologne, and the Elector Palatine were evidently hostile; the ministers themselves, while the queen was her-

\* The references which follow are applicable only to the original quarto edition of Coxe (London, 1807), Vol. ii., which is now rarely to be met with, at least in this country. For the convenience of the student, it may be mentioned, therefore, that the chapters here named, xvi., xvii., and xviii., correspond respectively to chapters xcv., xcvi., and xcvi. in the second and subsequent editions. — N.

self without experience or knowledge of business, were timorous, desponding, irresolute, or worn out with age. To these ministers, says Mr. Robinson, in his despatches to the English court, "the Turks seemed already in Hungary, the Hungarians themselves in arms, the Saxons in Bohemia, the Bavarians at the gates of Vienna, and France the soul of the whole." The Elector of Bavaria, indeed, did not conceal his claims to the kingdom of Bohemia and the Austrian dominions; and, finally, while the queen had scarcely taken possession of her throne, a new claimant appeared in the person of Frederic of Prussia, who acted with "such consummate address and secrecy" (as it is called by the historian), that is, with such unprincipled hypocrisy and cunning, that his designs were scarcely even suspected when his troops entered the Austrian dominions.

Silesia was the province which he resolved, in the present helpless situation of the young queen, to wrest from the house of Austria. He revived some antiquated claims on parts of that duchy. The subject is discussed in different writers, and in the notes of Coxe. The ancestors of Maria Theresa had not behaved handsomely to the ancestors of Frederic, and the young queen was now to become a lesson to all princes and states of the real wisdom that always belongs to the honorable and scrupulous performance of all public engagements. Little or nothing, however, can be urged in favor of Frederic. Prescription must be allowed at length to justify possession in cases not very flagrant. The world cannot be perpetually disturbed by the squabbles and collisions of its rulers; and the justice of his cause was, indeed, as is evident from all the circumstances of the case, and his own writings, the last and the least of all the many futile reasons which he alleged for the invasion of the possessions of Maria Theresa, the heiress of the Austrian dominions, young, beautiful, and unoffending, but inexperienced and unprotected.

The common robber has sometimes the excuse of want; banditti, in a disorderly country, may pillage, and, when resisted, murder; but the crimes of men, even atrocious as these, are confined at least to a contracted space, and their consequences extend not beyond a limited period. It was not so with Frederic. The outrages of his ambition were to be followed up by an immediate war. He could never suppose, that, even if he succeeded in getting possession of Silesia, the house of Austria could ever forget the insult and the injury that had thus been received; he could never suppose, though Maria Theresa might have no protection from his cruelty and injustice, that this illustrious house would never again have the power, in some way or other, to avenge their wrongs. One war, therefore, even if successful, was not to be the only consequence; succeeding wars were to be expected; long and inveterate jealousy and hatred were to follow; and he and his subjects were, for a long succession of years, to be put to the necessity of defending, by unnatural exertions, what had



been acquired (if acquired) by his own unprincipled ferocity. Such were the consequences that were fairly to be expected. What, in fact, took place?

The seizure of this province of Silesia was first supported by a war, then by a revival of it, then by the dreadful Seven Years' War. Near a million of men perished on the one side and on the other. Every measure and movement of the king's administration flowed as a direct consequence from this original aggression: his military system, the necessity of rendering his kingdom one of the first-rate powers of Europe, and, in short, all the long train of his faults, his tyrannies, and his crimes. We will cast a momentary glance on the opening scenes of this contest between the two houses.

As a preparatory step to his invasion of Silesia, the king sent a message to the Austrian court. "I am come," said the Prussian envoy to the husband of Maria Theresa, "with safety for the house of Austria in one hand, and the imperial crown for your Royal Highness in the other. The troops and money of my master are at the service of the queen, and cannot fail of being acceptable at a time when she is in want of both, and can only depend on so considerable a prince as the king of Prussia, and his allies, the maritime powers and Russia. As the king, my master, from the situation of his dominions, will be exposed to great danger from this alliance, it is hoped, that, as an indemnification, the queen of Hungary will not offer him less than the whole duchy of Silesia." "Nobody," he added, "is more firm in his resolutions than the king of Prussia: he must and will enter Silesia; once entered, he must and will proceed; and if not secured by the immediate cession of that province, his troops and money will be offered to the Electors of Saxony and Bavaria." Such were the king's notifications to Maria Theresa. Soon after, in a letter to the same Duke of Loraine, the husband of Maria Theresa, "My heart," says Frederic, (for he wrote as if he conceived he had one,) "My heart," says Frederic, "has no share in the mischief which my hand is doing to your court."

The feelings of the young queen may be easily imagined, powerful in the qualities of her understanding, with all the high sensibilities which are often united to a commanding mind, and educated in all the lofty notions which have so uniformly characterized her illustrious house. She resisted; but her arms proved in the event unsuccessful. She was not prepared; and even if she had been, the combination was too wide and powerful against her. According to the plan of her enemies, more particularly of France (her greatest enemy), Bohemia and Upper Austria, spite of all her efforts, were likely to be assigned to the Elector of Bavaria; Moravia and Upper Silesia to the Elector of Saxony; Lower Silesia and the country of Glatz to the

king of Prussia; Austria and Lombardy\* to Spain; and some compensation to be allotted to the king of Sardinia.

It was therefore, at last, necessary to detach the king of Prussia from the general combination by some important sacrifice. The sufferings, the agonies, of the poor queen were extreme. Lord Hyndford, on the part of England as a mediating power, prevailed on the helpless Maria Theresa to abate something of her lofty spirit, and make some offers to the king. "At the beginning of the war," said Frederic, "I might have been contented with this proposal, but not now. Shall I again give the Austrians battle, and drive them out of Silesia? You will then see that I shall receive other proposals. At present I must have *four* duchies, and not *one*. — Do not, my lord," said the king, "talk to me of magnanimity; a prince ought first to consult his own interests. I am not averse to peace; but I expect to have four duchies, and will have them."

At a subsequent period, the same scene was to be renewed, and Mr. Robinson, the English ambassador, who was very naturally captivated with the attractions and spirit of Maria Theresa, endeavoured to rouse her to a sense of her danger. "Not only for political reasons," replied the queen, "but from conscience and honor, I will not consent to part with much in Silesia. No sooner is one enemy satisfied than another starts up; another, and then another, must be contented, and all at my expense." "You must yield to the hard necessity of the times," said Mr. Robinson. "What would I not give, except in Silesia?" replied the impatient queen. "Let him take all we have in Gelderland; and if he is not to be gained by that sacrifice, others may. Let the king, your master, only speak to the Elector of Bavaria! O, the king, your master, — let him only march! let him march only!"

But England could not be prevailed upon to declare war. The dangers of Maria Theresa became more and more imminent, and a consent to further offers was extorted from her. "I am afraid," said Mr. Robinson, "some of these proposals will be rejected by the king." "I wish he may reject them," said the queen. "Save Limbourg, if possible, were it only for the quiet of my conscience. God knows how I shall answer for the cession, having sworn to the states of Brabant never to alienate any part of their country."

Mr. Robinson, who was an enthusiast in the cause of the queen, is understood to have made some idle experiment of his own eloquence on the king of Prussia; to have pleaded her cause in their next interview; to have spoken, not as if he was addressing a cold-hearted, bad man, but as if speaking in the House of Commons of his own country, in the assembly of a free people, with generosity in their feelings and uprightness and honor in their hearts. The king, in all the malignant

\* So in all the previous editions; but obviously a misprint for *Austrian Lombardy*. See Coxe, Ch. xcix. — N.



security of triumphant power, in all the composed consciousness of great intellectual talents, affected to return him eloquence for eloquence; said his ancestors would rise out of their tombs to reproach him, if he abandoned the rights that had been transmitted to him; that he could not live with reputation, if he lightly abandoned an enterprise which had been the first act of his reign; that he would sooner be crushed with his whole army, &c., &c. And then, descending from his oratorical elevation, declared that he would *now* "not only have the four duchies, but all Lower Silesia, with the town of Breslau. If the queen does not satisfy me in six weeks, I will have four duchies more. They who want peace will give me what I want. I am sick of ultimatums; I will hear no more of them. My part is taken; I again repeat my demand of all Lower Silesia. This is my final answer, and I will give no other." He then abruptly broke off the conference, and left Mr. Robinson to his own reflections.

The situation of the young queen now became truly deplorable. The king of Prussia was making himself the entire master of Silesia; two French armies poured over the countries of Germany; the Elector of Bavaria, joined by one of them, had pushed a body of troops within eight miles of Vienna, and the capital had been summoned to surrender. The king of Sardinia threatened hostilities; so did the Spanish army. The Electors of Saxony, Cologne, and Palatine joined the grand confederacy; and abandoned by all her allies but Great Britain, without treasure, without an army, and without ministers, she appealed, or rather fled for refuge and compassion, to her subjects in Hungary.

These subjects she had at her accession conciliated by taking the oath which had been abolished by her ancestor Leopold, the confirmation of their just rights, privileges, and approved customs. She had taken this oath at her accession, and she was now to reap the benefit of that sense of justice and real magnanimity which she had displayed, and which, it may fairly be pronounced, sovereigns and governments will always find it their interest, as well as their duty, to display, while the human heart is constituted, as it has always been, proud and eager to acknowledge with gratitude and affection the slightest condescensions of kings and princes, the slightest marks of attention and benevolence in those who are illustrious by their birth or elevated by their situation.

When Maria Theresa had first proposed to repair to these subjects, a suitor for their protection, the gray-headed politicians of her court had, it seems, assured her that she could not possibly succeed; that the Hungarians, when the Pragmatic Sanction had been proposed to them by her father, had declared that they were accustomed to be governed only by men; and that they would seize the opportunity of withdrawing from her rule, and from their allegiance to the house of Austria.

Maria Theresa, young and generous and high-spirited herself, had confidence in human virtue. She repaired to Hungary; she summoned the states of the Diet; she entered the hall, clad in deep mourning; habited herself in the Hungarian dress; placed the crown of St. Stephen on her head, the scymitar at her side; showed her subjects that she could herself cherish and venerate whatever was dear and venerable in their sight; separated not herself in her sympathies and opinions from those whose sympathies and opinions she was to awaken and direct; traversed the apartment with a slow and majestic step, ascended the tribune whence the sovereigns had been accustomed to harangue the states, committed to her chancellor the detail of her distressed situation, and then herself addressed them in the language which was familiar to them, the immortal language of Rome, which was not now for the first time to be employed against the enterprises of injustice and the wrongs of the oppressor. "*Agitur de regno Hungariæ,*" said the queen, "*de personâ nostrâ, prolibus nostris et coronâ; ab omnibus derelicti, unice ad inclytorum statuum fidelitatem, arma et Hungarorum priscam virtutem confugimus.*"\*

To the cold and relentless ambition of Frederic, to a prince whose heart had withered at thirty, an appeal like this had been made in vain; but not so to the free-born warriors, who saw no possessions to be coveted like the conscious enjoyment of honorable and generous feelings, — no fame, no glory, like the character of the protectors of the helpless and the avengers of the innocent. Youth, beauty, and distress obtained that triumph which, for the honor of the one sex, it is to be hoped will never be denied to the merits and afflictions of the other. A thousand swords leaped from their scabbards, and attested the unbought generosity and courage of untutored nature. "*Moriamur pro rege nostro, Mariâ Theresâ!*" was the voice that resounded through the hall, — "*Moriamur pro rege nostro, Mariâ Theresâ!*" The queen, who had hitherto preserved a calm and dignified deportment, burst into tears (I tell but the facts of history). Tears started to the eyes of Maria Theresa, when standing before her heroic defenders, — those tears which no misfortunes, no suffering, would have drawn from her in the presence of her enemies and oppressors. "*Moriamur pro rege nostro, Mariâ Theresâ!*" was again and again heard. The voice, the shout, the acclamation, that reechoed around her, and enthusiasm and frenzy in her cause, were the necessary effect of this union of every dignified sensibility which the heart can acknowledge and the understanding honor.

It is not always that in history we can pursue the train of events, and find our moral feelings gratified as we proceed; but in general

\* "*The business before you,*" said the queen, "*affects the kingdom of Hungary, our royal person, our issue, and our crown; deserted on all sides, it is to the illustrious attachment of the states, to the arms and the long-tried valor of the Hungarians, that we now fly for assistance.*"



we may. Philip the Second overpowered *not* the Low Countries, nor Louis, Holland; and even on this occasion, of the distress and danger of Maria Theresa, we may find an important, though not a perfect and complete, triumph. The resolutions of the Hungarian Diet were supported by the nation; Croats, Pandours, Selavonians, flocked to the royal standard, and they struck terror into the disciplined armies of Germany and France. The genius of the great General Kevenhuller was called into action by the queen; Vienna was put into a state of defence; divisions began to arise among the queen's enemies; a sacrifice was at last made to Frederic, — he was bought off by the cession of Lower Silesia and Breslau; and the queen and her generals, thus obtaining a respite from this able and enterprising robber, were enabled to direct, and successfully direct, their efforts against the remaining hosts of plunderers that had assailed her. France, that with her usual perfidy and atrocity had summoned every surrounding power to the destruction of the house of Austria, in the moment of the helplessness and inexperience of the new sovereign, — France was at least, if Frederic was not, defeated, disappointed, and disgraced.

The remaining pages of Coxe, to the end of his volume, are not less worthy of perusal. The administration of Maria Theresa occupies the greater part of it; and the interest that belongs to a character like hers, of strong feelings and great abilities, never leaves the narrative, of which she is, in fact, the heroine. The student cannot expect that he should always approve the conduct or the sentiments that but too naturally flowed from qualities like these, when found in a princess like Maria Theresa, — a princess placed in situations so fitted to betray her into violence and even rancor, — a princess who had been a first-rate sovereign of Europe at four-and-twenty, and who had never been admitted to that moral discipline to which ordinary mortals, who act in the presence of their equals, are so happily subjected. That the loss of Silesia should never be forgotten, — the king of Prussia never forgiven, — that his total destruction would have been the highest gratification to her, can be no object of surprise. The mixed character of human nature seldom affords, when all its propensities are drawn out by circumstances, any proper theme for the entire and unqualified praises of a moralist; but every thing is pardoned to Maria Theresa, when she is compared, as she must constantly be with her great rival, Frederic. Errors and faults we can overlook, when they are those of our common nature; intractability, impetuosity, lofty pride, superstition, even bigotry, an impatience of wrongs, furious and implacable, — all these, the faults of Maria Theresa, may be forgiven, may at least be understood. But Frederic had no merits, save courage and ability; these, great as they are, cannot reconcile us to a character with which we can have no sympathy, — of which the beginning, the middle, and the end, the foundation and the essence, was entire, unceasing, inextinguishable, concentrated selfishness.

I do not detain my hearers with any further reference to Maria Theresa. She long occupies the pages of history, — the interesting and captivating princess, — the able and still attractive queen, — the respected and venerable matron, grown prudent by long familiarity with the uncertainty of fortune, and sinking into decline amid the praises and blessings of her subjects. From the books and memoirs which I have mentioned every particular may be drawn which can be necessary to enable you to form your own estimate. Indeed, all the relevant and important observations connected with her history and her character will be furnished you either by Coxe or by Towers, or, lastly, by the king of Prussia himself.

I must now say a word, and but a word, on the wars of this particular era. Mr. Coxe, who prides himself on the military part of his History, may be consulted with respect to the Seven Years' War. Of all others this war has been the most celebrated, from the variety of its events, the military science displayed, and, above all, the extraordinary efforts of military genius exhibited by the king of Prussia. They who wish to pursue the subject farther than I can conceive necessary to any but professional men may refer to the book of General Lloyd, a work of character, and dedicated to the consideration of this part of the subject. Archenholz you will see quoted by Coxe, and it is, I understand, a work of great authority on the Continent.

I have not adverted to a most important part of the history of Frederic, — the partition of Poland; for I cannot yet conveniently approach times so near our own. But I may mention that my hearers will hereafter be referred by me chiefly to the Annual Register for 1771, 1772, 1773. The account there given is supposed to be drawn up by Burke. After all, the situation of Poland was such as almost to afford an exception, perhaps a single exception, in the history of mankind, to those general rules of justice that are so essential to the great community of nations. I speak this with great hesitation, and you must consider the point yourselves. I do not profess to have thoroughly considered it myself. There has lately appeared one of Sir James Mackintosh's valuable articles in the *Edinburgh Review*\* on the subject of Poland; and you will in him always find a master of moral and political science worthy of every attention you can bestow.

I have now mentioned all the books I consider necessary for your information. There are others which I do not think necessary, but which you may be led to consult from their connection with Frederic. I allude more particularly to parts of his own works, — his correspondence with the wits and philosophers of the day, more especially with Voltaire, whose reception, adventures, and final escape from the court of Prussia become almost a serious part of the history of the monarch.

\* *Edinburgh Review* for November, 1822. — N.



They who wish to know the nature of the speculations and religious opinions of Frederic, and the restlessness of his spirit of proselytism, may find matter enough for either their amusement or instruction in the *Memoirs of Thiébauld*. They will, at the same time, be not a little entertained by observing the invincible patience, the sevenfold shield of prudence and reserve, under which the attacks of the monarch were sustained by Thiébauld, the most wary of dependants and the most calm of observers.

But with respect to the king's correspondence with Voltaire, as I am thus obliged to allude to it, as well as to the works of Frederic himself, I cannot but recommend it to the student to hesitate and pause before he ever presumes to wander over the writings of these celebrated men, or indeed visit at all the unhealthy regions of French literature. Of course I do not speak of the great dramas, or of the grave or of the important works to be found in it. What I now say must be interpreted reasonably; I speak of the lighter works, and of those that profess chiefly to entertain; and speaking of such parts of the French literature, I would recommend it to the English student to prepare himself for the climate and company he will there meet, by first acquainting himself, and that most thoroughly, with the excellent authors that dignify the literature of our own country. Johnson and Paley, Locke and Butler, immediately occur as the great masters of moral, metaphysical, and religious instruction, — Locke, the votary of truth, and Paley, the very genius of good sense. Others might be mentioned, if this were the proper place to advise, or if I were worthy to be the adviser on subjects so important. But some adviser is necessary, and some preparation is necessary, before this department of very fashionable reading (the French literature) is entered upon. Ground must be secured upon which the great bulwarks of the understanding and the heart must be first erected and their foundations deeply laid. Already, and ere we have yet descended to the still more modern parts of history, we have been brought into contact with Voltaire and Frederic, and the wits and philosophers of their school. Whatever may be the merit, and whatever may be the praise, — the praise of genius undoubtedly, which cannot be denied to many of the popular writers of the French nation, — it is not, I think, too much to say, that the general effect of their works is always to withdraw the mind from that sound and virtuous state in which our own writers have left it. In the conversation and correspondence of Frederic the student will find much of what is well fitted to give him intellectual pleasure, and much also, I fear, that can have no tendency but ultimately to destroy all intellectual pleasure whatever. He will find, for instance, elegant literature, liveliness and good taste, wit, sententiousness, knowledge of human nature and of the world, interesting allusions to men who have made a figure in it, but he will also find impudent ridicule, gross ribaldry, systematic

religion, and a sort of unceasing, inveterate hostility exercised on subjects and names that the student himself has always been accustomed (and very properly) to consider with sentiments of seriousness and reverence. These are but mixed and opposite ingredients to be presented to a reader in the same work. How are we to hope that the mind, that the youthful mind, is to be only improved by the good, and not injured by the evil?

It is, therefore, with no little satisfaction that I can assure my hearer that he need not approach these volumes as a reader of history. There is in them little or nothing of an historical nature. The correspondence with Voltaire, which is the most likely to attract your notice, begins with the time when Frederic was under the displeasure of his father, and finding refuge from his tyranny in the pleasures of study and the consciousness of his own improving talents and maturing knowledge. Voltaire was his idol; and Frederic, the presumptive heir of the Prussian monarchy, and evidently possessed of an inquiring and powerful mind, might very naturally be in turn the idol of Voltaire. The praises, however, that are interchanged between the two correspondents soon disgust the modest and reasonable temperament of an English reader, and they never cease more or less to disgust, from the first opening to the last page of the correspondence. In one shape or another, these compliments constitute a large portion of the whole; observations on literature, and railings against superstition, the remainder; and by superstition is always meant the Christian religion. The meritorious part of Voltaire's letters consists in the protestations that he does not fail to make against wars, — protestations that are not at all relished by the king. The king confines himself to general declamations against the stupidity and folly of mankind, — observations that come with no very good grace from a man who never turned their stupidity and folly to any purposes but those of bloodshed and destruction, for the sake of his own personal aggrandizement. The talents of the king are, no doubt, very clearly seen in these letters, and he seems at last to write to Voltaire with all the freedom and decision of one who was his equal in intellectual powers, not his pupil. But it is in no other way than as an exhibition of literary talents that these letters can be of use to any reader. Politics are never mentioned but in a slight and superficial manner. The historian, even the speculator on human nature on the larger scale, can glean but little; nothing of any consequence about the first invasion of Silesia; little about the Seven Years' War, — little but this, that the king was evidently pressed to the utmost, and that he became at last quite sullen and fierce, as the dangers of his situation gathered more and more gloomy around him. Even of his amusing quarrel with Voltaire only the symptoms appear, not the particulars, and these but in two letters. The correspondence afterwards continues almost as if no quarrel had happened; the two wits were, from



their talents and a coincidence of sentiment on certain important points, quite necessary to each other ; and, in a word, from the whole of the intercourse that subsisted between these celebrated men, I know little of an edifying nature that can be offered to the consideration of the student but this, — that the regard which they expressed for each other before they met, though originating in the proper sources of regard, personal merit and kindred talents, was still of too extravagant a nature to be properly secured from uncertainty and disappointment. Now this is in itself edifying, for this I conceive will always be the case. Friendship between men, when it deserves the name, is the slow growth of mutual respect, is of a nature calm and simple, professes nothing and exacts nothing, — is, above all, careful to be considerate in its expectations, and to keep at a distinct distance from the romantic, the visionary, and the impossible. The torrid zone, with its heats and its tempests, is left to the inexperience of youth, or to the love that exists between the sexes ; the temperate, with its sunshine and its zephyrs, cheerful noon and calm evening, is the proper and the only region of manly friendship.

But if there be nothing to edify in the correspondence of the king, or even in those parts of Thiébauld which exhibit his speculative and religious opinions, there is much in his example that is of a most injurious nature. Frederic will be seen in the common course of these historical narratives living a life of activity and duty, at least of exertion and usefulness, as he believed, to his people, and dying at a very advanced age tranquil and unmoved, not indeed with the hope and humble confidence and pious anticipations, but certainly with all the composure, of a religious man. In all this there is nothing to edify, there is much to mislead the mind. The airy gayety and carelessness of skepticism is never without its attraction to the light-heartedness of youth. Fearlessness, and courage, and tranquillity, in scenes the most appalling, the field of battle or the bed of death, extort from us our involuntary respect, whatever be the person or the cause. The example of Frederic may therefore be well fitted to have its influence, and that influence one of a very unfortunate and melancholy kind ; it may appear to recommend to our choice the fascinations and privileges of skepticism.

But skepticism, it must be remembered, is one of those spirits that change their guise as we advance along in their company. This is the fiend that “ expects his evening prey.” Extraordinary men like Frederic, long conspicuous in the eyes of mankind, and knowing themselves to be so, long habituated to the exercise of self-command in seasons of the most imminent danger, may be consistent to the last, and never lose that composure and fortitude which have so uniformly through life elevated them above the level of their fellow-creatures. Their reward is of this world, and they obtain it. But what is this to the rest of mankind ? what is it to us common mortals ? what is

to us the example of Frederic? His example is nothing, and his opinions are nothing, and his death-bed is nothing. Placed as we are, not on thrones and at the head of armies, and to be gazed at by mankind, now and in future ages, but in the midst of our own unnoticed rounds of amusements and of business, of pleasures and of pains, amid temptations and duties of an ordinary nature, — growing to maturity for one short season, flourishing for another, fading, decaying, visibly dying away for a third, while, in the mean time, we at least are well aware that somewhere or other resides some stupendous Intelligence, in whose presence we thus revolve through the appointed vicissitudes of our being, and whose almighty will is then once more to be exercised upon our fate in some unknown manner, in some new situation, that is as yet impenetrably removed, beyond what is therefore to us the affecting, the anxious, the awful moment of our dissolution, — what is to us the example of Frederic? His example is nothing, and his opinions are nothing, and his death-bed is nothing; they are nothing, they are worse than nothing.

I have made these observations on French literature and on the skeptical writings of distinguished men, but nothing that I have now said must be interpreted in any manner unfavorable to the great interests of truth or the rights of free inquiry. Still less must it be supposed that men are to sit in judgment on the religious opinions of each other, and decide on the salvation of particular men, of Frederic, for instance, or Voltaire. To his own Master must each individual stand or fall, and to Him alone be responsible for the use of those faculties and opportunities with which he has been intrusted. Men must also be allowed the publication of their opinions, if this be done with decency and seriousness; for the learned can have no right to say that they are in possession of the truth, still less can the unlearned, unless every grave man can offer his opinions, be they what they may, though not to the multitude, at least to grave men like himself. Such are the principles which I conceive to be fundamentally necessary to the proper cultivation of religious truth, and of all truth. I must not be supposed for a moment to entertain the slightest wish to disturb or violate them; but when all this has been admitted, distinctions may still be made between different descriptions of literature, different systems of opinion, and different modes of religious inquiry. And when we are made thus casually to approach, in the course of our historical reading, a very particular department of modern literature, and in reality the most awful subjects that can be presented to our thoughts, it may be competent for me, it may be necessary, to compare and contrast, at least in the passing manner I have now done, the great body of the more entertaining, popular, and modern French writers with our own, and to require that the one should be well examined and digested, and *that* before the other be even at all looked at, — the more so because the human mind, when adverting



to serious, to moral, and religious subjects, is unhappily affected, particularly in early life, by many other considerations besides the just and salutary impressions of reason and of truth.

Such are the books and memoirs to which I would wish to refer the student, while he is endeavouring to appreciate one of the most distinguished characters of history, and the events with which that character is connected. The mass of reading I have mentioned is very considerable, — Gillies, Towers, Thiébauld, Frederic's own account of his political transactions, Mirabeau, and Coxe; and to these I have added a very amusing work by Wraxall, — his *Memoirs of the Court of Berlin*. But the general reader may, I think, be satisfied with Towers and Coxe; though much of Thiébauld, of the account of Frederic, and of Mirabeau, ought, I think, to be added by those who would fit themselves for the high character of men of intelligence and of statesmen.

But I must also mention, that by the general reader, and by every reader, the account that is given of Thiébauld's book in the *Edinburgh Review* for October, 1805, should also be considered. It is always my wish to occupy as little of your time in this place as possible, and never to offer you imperfectly what you may easily read properly delivered to you by the author himself. For these reasons I do not now stop to lay before you many of the observations which had occurred to me on the subject of Frederic, because I really have found them anticipated by the *Edinburgh reviewer*. I depend, however, upon your reading them in the *Review*, otherwise my lecture will want a part which I should have supplied myself, and without which it will be, even in my own conception, most materially defective. I must confess, too, that my dislike of Frederic would be thus disappointed of its gratification. This dislike is so great, that I can even bear to throw him, without compunction, as I now do, to the mercy of these Northern tormentors.

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## LECTURE XXX.

### GEORGE THE THIRD.

IN a late lecture, I endeavoured to conduct you through the history of the remaining part of the reign of George the Second, the intrigues that took place on the fall of Sir Robert Walpole, the merits of the Pelham administration, and of the ministry of Lord Chatham.

And I more particularly proposed to you such subjects (the Rebellion of 1745 and others, drawn partly from the events of the time, and partly from Debrett's Debates) as I thought best fitted to supply your minds with proper materials of philosophic and political reflection.

But before I proceed to our next subject, the reign of his present Majesty, I must observe, that, as you read our history down from the Revolution to the present time, more especially as you read the debates in Parliament, you will be repeatedly called upon to exercise your opinion upon reasonings and public measures that relate to our national debt, to taxes, excises, and topics of this nature; and it is desirable, as a preparation for such reading, that you should acquire some notion, as soon as possible, of the nature of a national debt and its consequences, — in short, become acquainted with the great subjects of political economy. I should therefore be well pleased, if I could refer you to some book or treatise where elementary explanations respecting such subjects might be found; but I know of no such book or treatise. The great work of Adam Smith is not an elementary book, — very far from it; and your best chance of understanding it is, to read of each chapter as much as you can, then go to the next chapter, and so on; and when you have got to the end of the book, begin the book again; and you will at length comprehend the whole sufficiently for any general purpose. I have lately seen a treatise by Mr. Boileau, which I hoped I might recommend to you on this occasion; but I do not think that it will be found either more simple or more intelligible than Adam Smith's original work, from which it is avowedly borrowed.

Since I wrote what I am now delivering, I have met with a book lately published, — *Conversations on Political Economy*. This appeared to me the elementary book that was wanted; and though there is a doubtful point or two in the more profound parts of the science, which is, I believe, rather mistaken, still the work seemed to me a work of merit, and fitted for your instruction. In this opinion I found Mr. Malthus, and Mr. Pryme, our own lecturer on political economy, concurring, and therefore I think myself authorized to recommend it to you.

I cannot detain you with observations on political economy; I do not lecture on political economy, and there is one of the members of our University who does, and who, I am sure, from the purest motives of endeavouring to do good to his fellow-creatures, has been, for some time, soliciting your attention to these most important, but grave and somewhat repulsive, subjects. Still, as the plan of my lectures is, to assist you, if I can, in reading history for yourselves, and as it is quite necessary to the proper comprehension of history from the time of the Revolution, that you should have some proper notion of at least the nature of a funded debt and of loans, and that



immediately, I will begin this lecture by a few observations on the subject, and by securing your minds, as far as I am able, from some of those mistakes and misapprehensions that are to be met with in conversation, and even in books and pamphlets which undertake to instruct the public. I shall be well employed indeed, if I thus apprise you of the importance of what may be considered as a new science in the world, the science of political economy. I will begin with the most common misapprehension of all.

Property in the stocks being continually bought and sold, and passed from one to another, a continual circulation, as it is called, of money is kept up; and by the practice of funding it is supposed that we have, in fact, fabricated to ourselves a species of fictitious wealth, which answers all the purposes, and procures to us all the advantages, of so much real wealth.

The easiest reply I can make to this popular error is by shortly stating what the nature of the funds really is. The whole mystery is no more than this: — A minister wishes to borrow a million, we will say, for the equipment of an armament; he borrows it, therefore, from those who have the money unoccupied, and he engages that the nation shall give them a proper interest for their money for ever: their names are therefore written in public books, with the sums they have lent; and these records of the transactions are the funds. The books are kept at the bank, where the interest is paid by the government; and these records give each person who belongs to them a right to receive such and such sums of interest from the public for ever. And these records may be broken into pieces, and transferred from one to another: but this, and nothing more, is done, when stock, as it is called, is bought or sold.

Money is brought out of society, if I may so speak, and given by the person who buys stock to the person who holds it, that is, who holds one of these rights or records; and he, after parting with his record, returns with the money into society: and so far the money has circulated, — it has been given from one man to another; but there is no fabrication of money, or of fictitious wealth. The funds are not *money*, they only represent money, — they represent money that has been long ago spent; but, being the records of these original loans, and therefore giving to their owners a claim on the nation to receive interest for ever, they have, no doubt, in themselves a value, and may therefore be continually bought and sold; and this has given occasion to all the mystery and confusion that have been noticed.

A more dangerous error is this: — It is continually affirmed that the greatest part of the money which is borrowed for a war is paid away to our artisans, our soldiers, and sailors, at our dock-yards, or manufactories, head-quarters, &c., &c.; that it never travels out of the island; that it is never lost by the state; that it only passes from one hand to another; and that, except when the money is paid out of

the kingdom to our soldiers abroad, or our allies, we are as rich as before. This mistake, indeed, the writers on political economy will enable you to avoid; for you will see them make a distinction between productive laborers and non-productive laborers, which you will of course have to consider. There are certain difficulties introduced into this part of the subject by a particular school of reasoners; but the distinction is sufficiently sound for our present purpose, and for all intelligible purposes. I shall proceed upon it.

Suppose we were all soldiers and sailors, that is, non-productive laborers, there would evidently be no one to feed and clothe us. To this preposterous state of ruin we therefore approach, the more sailors and soldiers we raise. The money that is given to them and for them is only the medium by means of which food and clothing, arms and accoutrements, are transferred to them from those who produce these articles. It is not meant to say that soldiers and sailors are useless, for they defend us; or that they deserve not what they receive, for they receive but little. All that is urged is, that they can produce nothing themselves, and that they must necessarily consume part of the produce of those who do; and that, consequently, the more of them we are obliged to maintain for any purpose, whether of offence or defence, the poorer we shall be, and the less able to become rich. It is not true, therefore, because the money is paid away to our soldiers, sailors, public officers, &c., and never goes out of the island, that *therefore* we are not the poorer. And in the former case, that of subsidies, loans, &c., when the money obviously does go out of the island, then, indeed, it is allowed by all that we are poorer. In these two cases, therefore, the matter is clear, and I shall dismiss them.

Still, some further explanation must be given of the manner in which we bear our extraordinary loads of taxation. Certainly there must be some truth in the popular notion, however vague, that the money raised by taxes never goes out of the kingdom, and that therefore we are not poorer.

I must, therefore, now propose to your thoughts a distinction which you must recollect; it is this: the money originally lent from time to time by different moneyed men to government is always to be carefully set apart in your minds from the money that is afterwards paid every year by the nation as the interest of it. The money originally lent, which the funds are the records of, is money that has been taken from the capital of the country; all this is, therefore, positive loss; it has been spent; the soldier and his ammunition, the sailor and his ship of war, have at length disappeared and are annihilated. These were what the money produced; they are gone. The money has been spent, therefore; we have it not: and if it had not been so spent, we *should* have had it; it would have been left in society to be added to our capital, and thus left to increase our means of pro-



duction or gratification. Here is, therefore, a distinct loss, continually measured and exhibited by the amount of the national debt. The only good that remains is the existence and affluence of those manufacturers that have been employed in furnishing our soldiers and sailors with their food, clothing, and implements of war; all the rest is loss. But the same cannot be said of the interest that is every year paid in consequence of it.

You must now consider by whom this interest is paid, and to whom. It is paid, more or less, by every man in the kingdom to the annuitants or shareholders who originally lent the principal. The interest, then, is paid by one part of society to another part of the same society. We have not here an annihilation and total destruction of any thing purchased, as in the former case. The money is not spent in soldiers and sailors, in gunpowder and implements of war, in provisions for their support in foreign countries; it is not spent on objects which immediately perish without producing any thing but our defence. The money is now given by society to certain annuitants, and this money may be said not to travel out of the island, and in that sense not to make us poorer. The very annuitants themselves pay their full share to the taxes; that is, they themselves pay a part of that money which they are afterwards themselves again to receive back as their interest, receive in their dividends at the bank.

All this is true, and may contribute to explain to you the manner in which we pay so much every year, and yet survive our expenses. But you are by no means to suppose that the quantity of our taxation is a matter of little or no consequence. You are not to conceive, as is generally done, that, because the interest does not go out of the island, it is, therefore, of no consequence how much is drawn from the public. It is still a matter of great importance what quantity of money is every year levied; for, to drop for the present our former language of productive and unproductive laborers, and to adopt language of the most ordinary nature, what is the case before us? The money is taken from one person and given to another. Now I may take the money from one person and give it to another, and the money may never go out of the island; but it is of great consequence who is the person I take it from, and who is the person I give it to. The person I take it from may, and indeed must be, in the main, one who lives by his industry; I must therefore be very careful what I take from him, though I give it to his neighbour and fellow-citizen; for otherwise I may materially affect his prosperity, — that is, as he is an industrious man, the prosperity of the country. The quantity taken is a most material point. I may require from him *so much*, that I may injure, dispirit, distress, and at length ruin him; and all this, though the money never goes out of the island, and is only paid from one to another.

This leads me to say one word on the subject of taxes. The most

useful observation which I can make to you is this: that all taxes are paid by men out of their *income*; and therefore, whether a person be a rich man or a poor man, but more especially in the latter case, his situation may be made, by taxation, to vary downwards from cheerfulness and affluence to uncomfortableness and privations, then to penury and ill-humor, and at last to wretchedness and sedition. A system of taxation may be prevented, by different causes, from visibly producing these very ruinous effects; but it always *tends* to produce them, and always *does* produce injury to a certain extent. Though its full operation be concealed, the weight is not the less in one scale because it is overbalanced by opposing weights in the other. The prosperity of a nation under a great system of taxation may be very striking and very progressive, yet that progress is not, in the mean time, the less restrained and retarded by the secret operation of the load which it drags after it.

But to conclude: as you read the history from the Revolution, you will indeed see the national debt continually increasing; and you will observe, in the debates in Parliament, repeated prophecies, that the debt must soon destroy us, that the practice of borrowing cannot go on, that the taxes are already intolerable, &c., &c. As no such effect has taken place, you may be tempted to despise all such prophecies and their authors, and will then have to despise the first patriots and statesmen that our country has produced, and such a writer on political economy as Hume.

You will therefore observe, that, in the first place, it is the moneyed interest who lend money to a government, — those who have money, for which they are satisfied to receive no more than the interest. This description of men, if I may use so violent a metaphor, is continually from time to time thrown off from the great circulating wheel of the *national prosperity*, — of the *national prosperity*, you will observe; and therefore, if the national prosperity declines, they will not be found.

In the second place, you will observe that it is from the produce of the land and labor of the community that the interest is to be paid. This interest, therefore, depends also upon the prosperity of the country. If, therefore, as before, that prosperity declines, the interest cannot be paid as it has been before, — not without greater injury and distress.

It happens that the prosperity of England since the Revolution has never ceased to be progressive, and this for many reasons which could not have been foreseen, and therefore to an extent which could not have been expected. Loans, on this account, have been continually made, and the interest continually paid. Yet neither are our statesmen nor our philosophers to be accused of mistaken principles. It does not follow, because a loan was made last year, that it can be made this year nor the contrary. The whole is a question of pros



perity, and therefore not a little of mere fact and experiment at the time when the loan is wanted, and the interest to be paid; whether there exist at the time those who have money to lend, — whether they have arisen in society in consequence of their successful industry; and again, whether there exist a sufficient number of individuals in society who can pay fresh taxes out of their income, — that is, whether the new interest wanted can be paid.

The canker, however, of a state is taxation. We may remember, therefore, what Swift says to those who were continually looking for his death: —

“My good companions, never fear;  
For though you may mistake a year,  
Though your prognostics run too fast,  
They must be verified at last.”

And if Hume were still alive (who is always referred to as a false prophet), he would probably not be induced, by any thing that has happened since he wrote, either in France or this country, to withdraw his observation, his sally of melancholy pleasantry, — that “princes and states, fighting and quarrelling amidst their debts, funds, and public mortgages,” reminded him of nothing but “a match of cudgel-playing fought in a china-shop.”

At the close of the late lecture, we arrived, as I have observed, at the accession of George the Third to the throne, and at the unexpected dismissal of the great war minister, Mr. Pitt, to make room for a nobleman at that time far less known either in Europe or in England, the Earl of Bute.

The reign has been in part written by Mr. Adolphus, I am given to understand, upon much better sources of information than any other writer has yet enjoyed. No reign can be properly written till the sovereign is no more, and it is possible that important materials for the future historian will hereafter be produced. But in the mean time the History of Adolphus will naturally be received into your studies, and must be mentioned and even recommended by me; and it therefore became my duty to direct my own perusal to this History, and ascertain whether it was necessary to accompany my recommendation with any particular remarks.

I had not proceeded far, before I met with the paragraph which I shall now read to you. You will be so good as to mark well every word it contains. You will find it a solution of all the material phenomena relative to cabinets and ministers that have distinguished this memorable reign. The passage in Adolphus is this: —

“The last two monarchs, being foreigners, and opposed by a native prince, who had numerous adherents, as well among the people as in some of the most illustrious houses, confided a large portion of their power to a few distinguished families, in order to secure possession of the crown. These families, strengthened by union and exclusive in-

fluence, became not only independent of, but in many respects superior to, the throne. Swayed by a predilection for their Continental dominions, the first two sovereigns of the house of Hanover incurred severe animadversions from the members of opposition; and the necessity of frequent justifications, rendering them still more dependent on the leaders of the ministerial party, reduced them almost to a state of pupillage.

“But the new king [George the Third], being exempt from foreign partialities, ascending the throne at a period when the claims of the exiled family were fallen into contempt, was enabled to emancipate himself from the restraint to which his ancestors had submitted. The Earl of Bute formed the plan of breaking the phalanx which constituted and supported the ministry, and of securing the independence of the crown, by a moderate exertion of the constitutional prerogative. This plan in itself was well conceived and necessary, but the Earl of Bute was not a proper person to carry it into effect. He was not connected, either by blood or by familiar intercourse, with the leading families in England; he was not versed in the arts of popularity, or used to the struggles of Parliamentary opposition; and his manners were cold, reserved, and unconciliating. Prejudices were easily excited against him as a native of Scotland, and he could only oppose to a popular and triumphant administration, and a long-established system, such friends as hope or interest might supply, and the personal esteem of the king, which was rendered less valuable by the odium attached to the name of favorite.”

I must confess that it was with some pain that I first read this remarkable paragraph, and not without some surprise. That the system here described had been really the system of the reign, I had always, indeed, conceived; and that it had been so represented by Mr. Burke, so early as the year 1770, I was well aware. But certainly I had not expected to see the system *avowed* by any one, writing, as it is understood, on the very best authorities, — still less *defended* by one who proposed to himself the character of an historian of England. Yet such is the fact.

I cannot assent to the propriety of the opinions and principles of this writer, and yet I have no other history, — at least, this is the most regular history that I have to offer you for your future study. The History of Belsham is a work, as I have already mentioned, of more merit than would at first sight be supposed. But in the year 1793, after the breaking out of the French war, it loses the character of history, and becomes little more than a political pamphlet; and through the whole of the reign of his present Majesty, it is so written, that it must be considered as a statement, whether just or not, but certainly only as a statement, on one side of the question, and must therefore, at all events, be compared with the statement on the other side, that is, with the History of Adolphus. On every account, there-



fore, I must present to you the work of Adolphus, and leave it to its influence on your minds.

But if this, which I have just read, be the paragraph with which it opens, if these be the principles on which it is written, and if the system just described be one which he conceives was reasonably recommended to the sovereign, I have no alternative but to state what I apprehend to be very serious objections to these principles and to this system; and I must do so, however disagreeable may be the discussion (as it certainly is) into which I must thus be drawn. The leading transactions of the reign, prior to the dispute with the American colonies, could furnish me, indeed, with no reflections of a more pleasing nature than can this paragraph of Adolphus. You will read them in the history; and you must be left to *read* them, not *hear* them from me; they scarcely fall within my province. But the principles of the system on which this or any other reign is conducted really come within the description of the more appropriate topics of a lecturer on history; and I shall therefore, on the whole, make the ensuing lecture a mere comment on the paragraph I have read. And I have only further to observe, that, while you are considering such points as will necessarily pass in review before us, you will in reality be considering the most delicate, curious, and critical questions that belong to the English constitution.

To return, therefore, to the paragraph I have just read. In the first place, I should hope that there is a certain air about the plan itself, as described by Adolphus, a certain want of proper sentiment, that would, to youthful minds like yours, be not very congenial. I will speak of the necessity of it hereafter; but *in limine*, and on the first view of it, what is it?

The first two monarchs of the Brunswick line, it seems, “confided a large portion of their power to a few distinguished families.” But why? “In order to secure possession of the crown.” A very adequate reason, no doubt; and if they in consequence succeeded in their wishes, neither the people of England, nor any princes of that Brunswick line, should readily forget their obligation.

Again, — “Swayed,” it seems, “by a predilection for their Continental dominions, the first two sovereigns of the house of Hanover incurred severe animadversions from the members of opposition; and the necessity of frequent justifications, rendering them still more dependent on the leaders of the ministerial party, reduced them almost to a state of pupillage”: that is, I fear, the leaders of this ministerial (then the Whig) party not only supported their sovereigns, but did so considerably at the hazard of their good name, — supported them not only as sovereigns of England, but as electors of Hanover, — indulged them even in their predilections for their Continental dominions, and had such merit with their sovereigns, in consequence of the sacrifices they thus made, that these sovereigns could not avoid

acceding to any wishes they expressed and any measures they proposed.

This may be, indeed, the case; but if it be, it is no very good preparation for the statement which Adolphus immediately subjoins. "The new king," says he, "being exempt from foreign partialities, ascending the throne at a period when the claims of the exiled family were fallen into contempt, was enabled to emancipate himself from the restraint to which his ancestors had submitted. The Earl of Bute formed the plan of breaking the phalanx," &c., &c. The new king might be enabled by these circumstances, no doubt; but was the Earl of Bute therefore justified in advising him thus to emancipate himself? So much for the original conception of the plan, which Mr. Adolphus has thought well conceived. But was, indeed, this plan so necessary as he states it to have been? You must consider this for yourselves.

You are supposed to be now reading that part of the history of England which bears upon this particular point. What was the pupilage to which George the First was reduced? Did the Whig families presume to thwart him in his expensive treaties and entangled intrigues to secure the great objects of his policy, the possession of Bremen and Verdun, — that is, as he thought, the prosperity of his *electoral* dominions? Far from it. Did not they consider their acquiescence as the price of his favor, or rather as the price that was to be paid for the expulsion of the Stuarts and the Revolution of 1688? Did not the Whig ministers and their sovereigns think the power and prosperity of each necessary to the best interests of the other? Was there more of pupilage and dependence in this connection than are always to be found in the connection of men who are bound to each other by an interchange of benefits in support of laudable objects? What are we to say of Sir Robert Walpole? Is not the great fault of Sir Robert at all times a too great anxiety for the personal favor of his sovereign, — a too great readiness to make sacrifices to obtain it, — an almost puerile terror of losing his place, when George the Second began to reign, and had dismissed him with an intention of making Sir Stephen Compton\* minister, — an unwillingness to lose it to the last moment of his administration, when Pulteney became triumphant?

George the First seems to have had no difficulty in keeping his favorite minister, Lord Stanhope, in power. His courtier, the Earl of Sunderland, was always of far more consequence in the state than he deserved. Sir Robert Walpole obtained not the superiority which he always merited, till his rivals were dead, or had been disgraced by the South-Sea Scheme. Sir Robert was, from the mere apprehension of losing his place, obliged to suffer his own *personal* enemy,

\* A mistake for *Sir Spencer Compton*. See Coxe's *Memoirs of Sir Robert Walpole*, (London, 1816,) Vol. ii., ch. 32, p. 288. — N.



and the enemy of his king and country, Lord Bolingbroke, to return. All the terms he could make with the sovereign and his mistress were, that this dangerous man should not appear again in the House of Lords. What is there here of pupilage in the sovereign? The influence of Sir Robert Walpole arose from his own personal merit, — first, with the House of Commons, — and, secondly, with Queen Caroline, who assisted him: not in managing the House of Commons, and thereby controlling the king, — but in managing the king, and therefore in appearing to that house as the man who was honored with his confidence and favor.

The only two instances in which the wishes of the sovereign were thwarted were when the Pelhams overpowered Lord Carteret, though the avowed favorite of his master, and when Mr. Pitt was admitted into office, though personally disliked by the king. In the former of these instances, the Pelhams were more approved of by the country than their rival, Lord Carteret; they were known to be less ready than he to go every length which the king might wish in the politics of the Continent. That they afterwards made too great sacrifices to him in these points, — particularly the Duke of Newcastle, — more than they could well justify to themselves, only serves to show how important they thought the king's favor, and how necessary to their continuance in office. In the last instance, of Mr. Pitt, was not the real objection to him the superiority of his merit? that he was conscious of his high talents, and had not the servility of those who have nothing but servility to depend upon? Yet, in the event, did not even Mr. Pitt submit to the German system of politics, when he became himself a minister? Contrary to all his former opinions, repeatedly avowed with all the fervor of his eloquence, did he not declare that this system was a millstone round his neck, with which he entered into office? For what reason did he suffer it to remain there, but because he found the court too powerful?

You will therefore consider, as you read the history, how far the Whig families or ministers did become, as Adolphus insists, “not only independent of, but in many respects superior to, the throne”; and, again, even admitting the fact, how far they were likely to continue so, at the accession of his present Majesty.

The plan, however, of Lord Bute for their subjugation, as it would have been called, when once conceived, was without much difficulty carried into execution. Mr. Pitt's power was founded on his superior abilities, and the high opinion of the public; that of the Duke of Newcastle, on his family and political connections. Both were attached to the principles of Whiggism; but Mr. Pitt despised the duke, and the duke hated and feared Mr. Pitt. Mr. Pitt was, unfortunately, too conscious of his own superior talents; overbearing and unaccommodating, even to his distinguished relative, Lord Temple. It was no difficult matter, therefore, for the king, first, to drive Mr.

Pitt from office, — then the Duke of Newcastle, — then Lord Rockingham, who came in as a Whig minister, without Mr. Pitt, — then Mr. Pitt, who came in as a Whig minister, without Lord Rockingham; and so to manage the mistakes, the feelings, and the virtues of all concerned, as to destroy the confidence of all parties in themselves and in each other, and, by the aid of such men of talents as were ambitious, and of such men of property and connection as were inclined to the court, to continue, for ten or twelve years, a sort of running fight with the Whigs and their principles, till the ministry of Lord North was found sufficiently stable and accommodating to serve all the purposes and gratify all the wishes of the patrons of the new system. And it was not necessary to proceed farther in the way of experimental administrations, to determine the least possible quantity of Whiggism by which the business of the country could be conducted. But are these proceedings, the consequences of this new system, in reality deserving of the approbation of any intelligent historian of England?

It is not to be supposed that the new system was much relished by the nation, at that time sufficiently near the Revolution and the Rebellion of 1745 to be fond of Whiggism, — or at all relished, more particularly, by the metropolis, always the most enlightened part of every community. The young monarch and his court became suddenly unpopular; his levees were disturbed by petitions that talked of the principles that had seated his family on the throne; and the mob delivered their particular sentiments, on every occasion, after their own violent and tumultuous manner. I do not enter into the detail of these occurrences that so unhappily marked the opening years of his Majesty's administration. But it is necessary to say, in a word, that they did no credit to the new system, or to its advisers.

It is easy to talk of sedition and faction, the licentiousness of the people, the ignorance and the brutality of the mob of a metropolis. They who see a monarch, amiable and respectable in his nature, in the full exercise of every private and domestic virtue, ascend his throne in the bloom of youth, amid the shouts and applauses of his subjects, and then, without any national calamity, or rather amid the highest national prosperity, suddenly cease to be the object of admiration, find his palaces resounding with complaints, his courts of justice with prosecutions for libels, and his highways with uproar, — they who can think that such general terms as “faction,” “sedition,” “licentiousness,” are a sufficient solution of such phenomena, may pride themselves, if they please, on their loyalty, as they might, with equal reason, on their sagacity. But philosophers and statesmen are not likely to acquiesce in reasons so superficial, and will not be quite so ready to suppose, that, in a time of public and exterior prosperity, every thing can be going wrong in the *interior* of a community, un-



less some mistakes of a very unfortunate nature have been made by those who are intrusted with the management of its concerns.

But to return to the new system, and to the original necessity on account of which it was adopted. One final illustration of this necessity may be offered in a few words. "The Earl of Bute," to use the words of the historian, "was not a proper person to carry this plan into effect; not connected, either by blood or by familiar intercourse, with the leading families in England; not versed in the arts of popularity, and not used to Parliamentary opposition; a native of Scotland, with nothing to oppose to a popular and triumphant administration, but such friends as hope or interest might supply, and the personal esteem of the king." These are the words of the historian: but what has been the result? Such has proved to be the influence of the crown, that is, so totally unnecessary has been this new plan of government, that his royal pupil has never found it necessary to submit to the calamity of a Whig ministry but for three short years (strictly speaking, not so often), at three different intervals, during a reign of half a century.

But to dwell a little longer on the necessity of the case. Lord Bute must be supposed to have understood the records of the past very differently from what they can now be understood. Had there ever appeared in these Whig families, in the Walpoles, in the Townshends, and the Pelhams, any opinions inconsistent with the reverence that was due to their sovereign, any improper disregard of the interests of the prerogative, any idle ebullitions of unqualified democracy, that could disquiet or displease a monarch of the Brunswick race? The more ardent friends of the popular part of the constitution may, indeed, think, that, with all their merits, the Whig families have had their faults; that they first made, and never afterwards repealed or modified, the Septennial Bill; that they sacrificed the interests of England to those of Hanover, as their sovereigns required; that at all times they were quietists rather than reformers. These accusations may be preferred against them by the more ardent friends of the popular part of our constitution; but the friends of the monarchical part had *no* accusation to offer. Their only semblance of complaint was this, that the sovereign could not *comfortably* rule but by means of the Whig families; that is, could not be independent. Lord Bute should have considered how exaggerated was this sort of statement; should have reflected well on the nature of a limited monarchy; whether the existence of some restraint was not implied in the very notion of it. What restraint, if the facts were coolly examined, could be supposed less than that to which, through the medium of the Whig families, the monarchs of the Brunswick line had been exposed? — what restraint more easy to the monarch? — what more creditable to the nobility? — what restraint on the monarch less likely to debauch the minds of the people by filling them with any unrea-

sonable notions of their own importance? — what more safe and salutary to all concerned?

The truth is, that there was, on the whole, no necessity for this plan of Lord Bute; — much the contrary; and there was a very serious preliminary objection to it on the grounds of sentiment and feeling; and on the whole, I see not how any one who has meditated on subjects of government can survey the adoption of this new system with any other sentiments than those of the most distinct pain and unequivocal regret.

For it is always to be remembered that it is the spirit with which a constitution is in practice administered that is the great point of consequence, far more than the letter of the law. It was, therefore, very properly specified by George the Second, in his speech at the breaking out of the Rebellion in 1745, that “the *maxims* of the constitution should ever be the rules of his conduct.” That sort of discretionary power, which must at every turn be lodged somewhere or other, becomes the safeguard or the enemy of the civil freedom of the community, just as it is, or is not, exercised in a constitutional manner, in favor of the subject. What, then, is to be the consequence, if every thing is to be administered in that spirit which would be approved of by a monarch and his courtiers, such as monarchs and courtiers, without the slightest disrespect to them, may generally be expected, on the common principles of our common nature, to be found, and gifted with whatever measure you please of natural good sense and benevolence? What is to be the consequence, (as every topic that respects either the polity or the affairs of a nation admits at least of a debate,) if in every question the king and his friends are to give the tone, and if they who differ from the court side of the question are to be esteemed no longer the friends of their king, and are to be set apart from their fellow-subjects as those who are the last to be honored with the royal favor, — that is, according to the new system of government, the last who are to appear in the cabinet, or the great offices of state, or are to become king’s counsel, or post captains, or officers of excise or customs, or rise in the army, or receive ecclesiastical patronage, or have chancellors’ livings, or be elevated to the bench, — to be the last, themselves, who are to be so promoted, and to find the same system of silent discountenance extended to their relations and dependants, their friends and connections?

In the mean time, no complaint can be made, and there is no one to accuse. The king has a right to appoint his own ministers and his own officers, through every department of the state; one man can discharge an office as well as another; reasons of preference may exist, but of these the constitution has left the king the sole judge. We may say that he is ill-advised; that the men preferred are not the best; that they have won their situations not so much by their known merits as by their known servility: all this we may say, and say truly,



and the only answer returned will be, that we want the office for ourselves, and perhaps that we are factious and disloyal. In the mean time, while the country becomes more and more civilized, it becomes more and more difficult for every man to provide for a family without sinking his rank in society. Professions are more and more preferred for the younger branches. The candidates for patronage continually increase; and if no patronage is to descend but through the medium of the king's friends, if none is to be gained but by those who profess and support high maxims of government on every occasion, what is to be the result?

Perhaps a word may not be uttered all this time by the court, or its friends, or its partisans, apparently unfavorable to the constitution of the country; certainly not a word contradictory to the letter of its laws, or the form of its institutions. Government must be supported; who can doubt it? The crown must have its weight in the system, assuredly, — if not by prerogative, as in former times, by influence, by posts, places, and even sinecures. The friends of a limited monarchy are not very well prepared to deny this, and speak rather of the measure of these things than of the things themselves; and thus it happens, that well-meaning, independent, and even sensible men either adopt or do not oppose the new system, and do not perceive that the vital principle by which the constitution of these kingdoms, though always in its letter a strong arbitrary monarchy, was heretofore in its practice rendered a benign limited monarchy, and to all essential purposes a free government; that this vital principle is, in truth, endangered to the utmost; that it must gradually decline, as the new system grows up in strength and maturity, and the event ultimately be the appearance in our own government of that torpor and general servility which mark a government more or less arbitrary, like the old government of France, under Louis the Fourteenth: all this, or some recoil of a furious nature directly the reverse, from the supposed peril and despair of the case.

Extremes can be right on no side. The king is not to be a cipher in the state; he is to select his ministers and servants from the public men whom the country supplies. But it is *the proper exercise of this discretionary power* that is the question before us; and this should become the subject of your reflections, as you read the history of this country from the Revolution downwards; for it is this that is the hinge (if I may be allowed the expression) on which the constitution of the country really turns, — this proper exercise of the discretionary power lodged by the constitution in the great executive magistrate to choose his ministers and servants. And as it would be one extreme, to leave him no exercise of his judgment, or no powers of choice, on the one hand; so is it, on the other hand, *another* extreme, to lay down, and have it avowed as a system, that the government shall always be carried on by those whom he or the court thinks proper to denominate his friends.

Times and circumstances, the nature and characters of public men, must teach their own lessons ; a subject of this singular, delicate, and impalpable nature cannot be marked out by the line and the rule ; but we may say, and cannot say it too often, that, if the only road to honors and power is the mere personal favor of the sovereign, then those men alone will be found from time to time possessed of honors and power who are favorable to the maxims of prerogative, to the principles of harsh government, — who are very indulgent critics of the measures of ministers, — who are very careless auditors of the public expense, — who are not made very uneasy by sinecures, jobs, and pensions, — who are not very ready to try or punish public defaulters, unless, indeed, they be the writers of libels, — who are, in a word, always unwilling to assist, or rather who are always willing to impede, in its operations the democratic part of our mixed constitution. Whether it be by such men and such principles that the constitution of these kingdoms has been saved, (not to speak of our Plantagenets, our Tudors, and our Charleses, — but saved from James the Second, from Lord Bolingbroke, from the Jacobites of 1715 and 1745, and, above all, from that silent tendency to deterioration which belongs to every thing valuable among mankind,) whether it is to such men and such principles that we are to ascribe the freedom of this country at this moment, must be left to the consideration of those who can push their inquiries beyond the forms of things into their principles and essence, and who will soon perceive, that, however necessary to every civil polity must be its ranks and establishments, its officers and magistrates, and, above all, its great magistrate, the king, as supreme, all this is but an inferior and even (if I may use such an expression) but a vulgar part of the whole, for it is what has been accomplished by France and Austria, and every other monarchy in Europe, — and that the real and rare, and above all price inestimable, peculiarity of our constitution is that democratic principle which can pervade and influence the whole, and yet not produce (its more natural fruits) confusion, disorder, and folly, but act in perfect consistence with the peace and best interests of the state, — and which, whenever it becomes extinct, and can no longer thus influence and pervade the whole (from whatever cause the extinction may take place, — a new system that has betrayed the constitution, the necessities of the times which have destroyed its maxims, either or both), — whatever be the cause or the system that, in a word, leaves men of talents and property without popular motives of action, it will assuredly, sooner or later, leave this great kingdom no longer to be distinguished from others that do or have existed, on the Continent or elsewhere, — its lower orders without spirit, its middle ranks without opinions, its public assemblies without weight, and its kings without a people.

Before the Revolution, the favorites of our monarchs were often



driven away from the sovereign, fined, imprisoned, or executed; and the democratic part of our constitution, on these occasions, rushed forth (if I may be allowed the expression) to teach the monarchical part its proper duties in its own rude and uncereemonious manner. But these were, in fact, more or less, revolutions in the government. It is not thus that we can wish, in our own times, the personal character of our sovereign to be humbled, or the faults and failings that may be more or less inseparable from any hereditary wearer of a crown to be brought before the tribunal and visited by the direct censure of the community. To set in array democracy against monarchy, and merely to leave the one to correct the mistakes and punish the offences of the other, is no very refined or rational expedient for the management of a state. It is every thing the reverse. It may have been resorted to by men who were hurried on by the torrent of circumstances, like our ancestors in the time of Charles the First, or the patriots of Greece and Rome, who conceived they had no other resource against tyranny and oppression; but the politicians of a highly civilized and intelligent country will always consider any open collision in the state as the greatest of all calamities, unless it be the absence of civil freedom itself; and they will therefore look round very carefully, to find, if possible, some expedient for the proper management of a community under a mixed monarchical system of government, the representative assembly having the power of taxation, and the king the power of dissolving them.

Now to those who are meditating the subject of a good constitution of government in this elementary manner, an aristocracy would first present itself; and at length an aristocracy with popular feelings would appear, as I conceive, the great desideratum. From such an aristocracy men might be chosen who might be ministers, not favorites; who could sympathize with the democratic part of the constitution, yet be naturally attached to the office and prerogative of the sovereign, — might be themselves objects of love and respect to the one, and of kindness and esteem to the other, — of confidence to both.

But how is such an aristocracy, an aristocracy with popular feelings, to be found? It could not well be generated by mere institution; none such has ever appeared in the world. A monarch may be easily created; the people we have already; but where is to be found such a cement of the two as an aristocracy with popular feelings? Set an order of men apart, give them privileges and titles of honor, and you raise up a nobility; but it will only be to leave them to unite with the sovereign at all times against the public, to render them insolent and unfeeling to their inferiors. The patricians of Rome, the nobles of Venice, even the feudal nobility of Germany and France, none of these are the exact description of men we wish for.

Now I must confess it appears to me that we were furnished very tolerably with what we could desire, when we had the aristocracy of England such as it existed during the reigns of George the First and George the Second. Consider it in all its functions, relations, opinions, feelings: a nobility who were graced with privileges and honors, armed with property and power; who had placed the reigning family on the throne; but who had done this on popular principles; who were thus bound to the king, but were also pledged to the people; who were connected with the sovereign by the enjoyment and expectation of titles and offices, and yet united to the people, first, by a common resistance to an arbitrary power, then by common laws, common maxims and opinions, religious and political, mutual respect, common interests of property and security; and were even allied and interwoven into the mass of their fellow-citizens by mingling, through the medium of their dearest relations, in the democratic branch of the legislature. A more favorable situation of things could not well be supposed by the most sanguine speculator on the social union of mankind. The misfortune would undoubtedly be, that even this aristocracy might not be sufficiently jealous of the prerogative of the crown, not sufficiently alive to the claims and rights of the subject. But, on the whole, a considerable approach would be made to secure, in a peaceful and steady manner, the main interests of all the constituent parts of the community.

Here we must come to a pause. It is now that the new system of Lord Bute presents itself. It was the very end and aim of this new system to destroy this very aristocracy, at least that part of this aristocracy with which we are at present concerned, — that part more particularly distinguished for its more popular principles, receiving confidence alike from the favor of the sovereign and the approbation and gratitude of the people. Far from turning it to the great purposes to which it might have been applied, far from bringing it forward to the discharge of all the high and healing offices of which it was capable, it was the immediate effect of the new system to counteract all such purposes, to disregard all such offices, to entertain far other views of the constitution of England, or of the benefits to be derived from any constitution of government, — to provide in a manner totally different for the dignity and happiness of the sovereign, for the respectability of the aristocracy, and for the welfare of the people.

According to the new system, the king was to be as independent of his aristocracy, and not as intermingled as possible in all their interests and sympathies, — to be rescued from the necessity of sharing his consequence with any order, or any individuals of that order. He was to rule by men who looked only to the throne, — not by the Whig families who had some respect for themselves, as well as reverence for the monarch, and who looked also to the people. He was



to choose his ministers, and that entirely as his own partialities directed him: that is, "favorites," under the title of friends, were to be preferred, as fit objects of his confidence, to men who had characters and opinions of their own, and who therefore could operate with a salutary influence on his. But this was not all. Great efforts were to be made to accomplish this destruction of the political influence and popular feelings of the Whig families; a miserable system of intrigue was to be entered upon. The least honorable men of each knot and division of the aristocracy were to be brought over to the court party, the better to destroy all confidence and union among those who remained; to divide, and therefore rule, to degrade, and therefore render insignificant, was the very scheme and essence of the plan, involved in the very supposition of it. And these new converts, these deserters and stragglers from their family and party attachments, from the notions of their ancestors, from the popular sympathies by which they had hitherto been so honorably distinguished, these were the men who were to be associated as friends and familiars to the bosom of their sovereign. The people in the mean time were to lose their former respect for public men, whom they were now to see mutually betraying and accusing each other, — and even for the sovereign himself, whom they were *also* to see, as far as they could judge, practising upon the mean and selfish passions of his aristocracy.

I confess that it appears to me a more unhappy expedient than the new system could not well have been devised, for procuring the extinction of every thing rare and precious in the constitution of our government, for destroying the British patriotism of the monarch, the British spirit of the nobility, the British loyalty of the people. Prerogative was to remain, and privilege was to remain, and obedience was to remain; but all these necessary elements of government were to lose their former sympathies, limits, and nature: they were no longer to be what they were made by the Revolution of 1688.

The maxims of a court are not the security of a court; servility is not loyalty; and attachment to civil freedom not republicanism. It may answer well to the designing on each side, to confound principles and characters, in themselves distinct. But when proper allowance has been made, and pardon extended to the unavoidable faults and mistakes of public men and private men of every description, of parties and of their leaders, it will always be competent for any one who really understands the mixed and free constitution of this country, if he pleases, to distinguish from each other those who think too exclusively of the king, those who think too exclusively of the people, and those who are not only virtuous, but wise enough to think of the best interests of both. I condescend not to speak of those who think only of themselves, who have no political principle at all, who mean only to get place or preferment in their profession.

Here I had been accustomed to end the lecture, after I had referred my hearers to Burke's *Thoughts on the Cause of the Present Discontents*, to other pamphlets of the time, and to the general principles of Lord Bolingbroke's writings, as contrasted with those of Mr. Burke; but in the year 1823 I had been struck with certain appearances that I had observed in and out of Parliament, and I from that time always ended the lecture by subjoining what I shall now read, — written, you will remember, in the year 1823.

This new system had a tendency to increase servility in the nation, in the way I have suggested; but it did not follow, though it should succeed, as it did succeed, in a most unfortunate manner, still it did not follow, that it should extinguish, in a country like this, the spirit of freedom, — the spirit that naturally belongs to the commercial and manufacturing classes, as they rise into affluence and importance. But in this case it will have, undoubtedly, an effect in giving to this spirit, as exhibited in these classes, a more republican tone and feeling. The new system has gone far to destroy the Whig families and their influence. It is possible, also, that the great events of modern times, that mistakes of the Whigs themselves, that the fickle nature of human opinions, that all or any of these, may have contributed to the same effect. But any change of this kind will be, to all who love the constitution of their country, and who, I must presume to add, have examined and understand it, a circumstance deeply to be lamented. For a fearful void, an arena that may very easily be covered with tumult and bloodshed, is immediately disclosed, when the monarch is set on one side, and the people on the other, and an aristocracy with popular feelings is withdrawn from between them. It can never have been the interest of the people, still less of the crown, to have any alteration like this in our political system. What may not be the fortunes of our constitution, and the experiments to which it may be exposed, if the ancient friends of liberty, the friends of liberty upon the ancient and tried model, are no longer to be treated with confidence and respect?

When Mr. Burke had to defend his country, as he conceived, from the democratic principles of France, it was to the Whigs and their principles, and the Revolution of 1688, that he appealed. Mr. Sheridan, in like manner, with directly opposite opinions, did the same; and it was for the people of England to decide between them. Nothing could be more valuable to a community than to have, at any crisis like this, a common test and standard to which they could refer. Nothing can be so important to a nation already possessed of prosperity and freedom to so remarkable a degree, — nothing so important, as a ready means, like this, of protecting themselves from the heats and delusions of particular seasons, as a ready means, at all times, of distinguishing from each other the man of speculation and the man of sense.



In a word, they who have proposed and patronized the new system have been preparing the people of England, more or less, for that species of monarchy which has been represented by Hume as the euthanasia, the natural and tranquil death, of the British constitution; or they have been preparing us, on the other hand, for the influence of those who are desirous to refer every thing to the people, to their public meetings, their resolutions and addresses, their will, in short, and their wisdom, when enlightened by the press, to be produced on every occasion, and to be considered as a specific for every political disease that can approach us. But such an order of things is republicanism, under whatever name it may be disguised. Such a government may be better for America: by some it may be thought better for England; but it is not the constitution of England, and on this head, at least, let no mistakes be made.

Any effect of the kind now described might be little in the contemplation of Lord Bute, of those who first advised the new system, of those who have since, or those who, even now, venture to maintain it; but it is no uncommon occurrence in the history of human affairs, to see men, while they are escaping from one uneasiness or restraint, incur evils of an opposite nature, far more disagreeable in themselves, and far more destructive in their consequences.

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## LECTURE XXXI.

### AMERICAN WAR.

I HAVE in my last lecture alluded to the opening of the present reign, and to the new system of government which was then adopted. I do not think it necessary to enter into the discussion of such events as took place. I have proposed to your consideration such observations and principles as will enable you, I conceive, both to explain and judge of them. The narrative and details, to which you are to apply them, you must yourselves study.

I hasten to the subject which I always proposed to myself as the proper termination of these lectures, — the American War.

Prior to the French Revolution, this subject could not have been well presented to you; for the passions that it had excited could scarcely have been said to have properly subsided. But at the very name and sound of the French Revolution, every other revolution and event loses its first and even proper interest; and we now discuss the

measures and administration of Lord North, or the conduct of the American Congress, the claim of the right of taxation on the one part, and the resistance to that claim on the other, *almost* with the same impartiality which would be felt by the reasoners of after ages. Such sentiments, therefore, as occur to me, and as occur to others, I shall lay before you in the most unreserved manner; considering the whole as now become entirely a portion of history, which I may fairly attempt to convert, as I would any other, to the proper purposes of your instruction.

The American war must immediately appear to you a subject of historical curiosity. By the event of that war, an independent empire has arisen, boundless in extent, and removed from the reach of the arms, secure at least from the invasions, of Europe; beginning its career with such advantages as our communities in the Old World never possessed; beginning almost from the point to which they have but arrived in the progress of nearly two thousand years. It is even possible that what England once was may have to be traced out hereafter, by the philosophers of distant ages, from the language, the customs, the manners, the political feelings of men inhabiting the banks of the Mississippi, or enjoying the benefits of society amid what may be now a wilderness, inaccessible to the footsteps of every human being.

Such is the American war, as a subject of historical curiosity to the readers of whatever clime or nation. But to ourselves it is even more attractive and important. One half of our empire has been violently rent from the other. We no longer, in case of a war, shut out that long line of harbours from the ships and fleets of our enemies; we no longer let loose the privateers of America upon their trade; we no longer man our fleets with her strong and skilful seamen: all these advantages are no longer exclusively our own; they may even be turned against us. Great Britain seems no longer to overshadow the globe, the West as well as the East, with the image of her greatness. Assuredly, at the peace of 1763, the power and empire of this country seemed to the nations, and might have appeared even to the philosophers of Europe, above all ancient, and above all modern fame. To what extent that power and empire might have been carried by the interchange of the natural productions of America with the manufactures of Britain, by the proper application and sympathy of youthful and matured strength, it is indeed difficult for us to determine; but the subject of the possible greatness of Great Britain did not a little disquiet, as it appears, the speculations of our enemies, whether feeling for their posterity, or attentive to their own advantages.

How, then, was it, or why, that this promising appearance of things was, on a sudden, to cease? How was it that this great empire was to be torn asunder? that France, and other unfriendly



powers on the Continent, had no longer to dread the united strength of England and America; but could even please themselves, like Tacitus of old while in terror of the enemies of Rome, with the spectacle of a civil war, and employ themselves in turning the force of the one to the destruction of the other?

You may be told, indeed, in a word, that Great Britain wished to tax America, and that America successfully resisted. But how, may you reasonably think, could such things be? Could not a dispute about revenue have been composed without an open rupture and a separation, — without the shedding of blood, — without the horrors and calamities of a civil war? And again, if arms were to be resorted to, how could it happen that Great Britain should fail in the contest? that the same power which had just humbled the house of Bourbon should not be a match for her own colonies, — should not be able, after overpowering the fleets and armies of the first nations of Europe, immediately to discomfit the farmers and merchants of America? How are such events to be explained? What demon of folly got possession of our councils? What malignant star shed its influence on our arms? Where were our statesmen, and where were our generals?

I conceive, therefore, that there is now before you a very striking subject of historical interest, if you can but abstract yourselves, as you must always endeavour to do, from your present knowledge of the event, and set yourselves to consider what were the principles in action at the time, and what it was natural to expect would be the consequences: comparing, as you proceed in the history, these expected consequences with the real events; reading, indeed, the narrative, but stopping from time to time to gather up the instruction which the facts, thus reviewed, are fitted to afford you.

I will now, therefore, mention the books which you may consult. — The history of the American Revolution has not yet been written by any of the great masters of literature; and since the appearance of the French Revolution, I know not that any writer of this description would be properly rewarded by any attention which the public would pay to his work, whatever might be its merit. Another circumstance is also to be mentioned: he would not find the precise materials he might expect. The American patriots, when they met in Congress to deliberate on the resistance to be made to Great Britain, debated with closed doors, and what passed cannot now be known; yet the feelings and reasonings of such men, on such an occasion, would have constituted the most instructive portion of the whole dispute. The same, nearly, may be said of the debates in our own Parliament, which could only have been second in interest to the former. But the report of these debates will extremely disappoint you; it is meagre and imperfect. Access to our House of Commons was sometimes altogether denied, and was always rendered, as it appears

from passages in the debates themselves, a matter of some difficulty. The consequence was very unfortunate, — not, indeed, to the same extent as in the former case, but still to a degree much to be lamented. Some idea may indeed be formed, from these debates, of the talents of Colonel Barré, Sir George Savile, and even of Burke; some, perhaps, though a most inadequate one, of the powers of Fox; and, on the whole, a general notion of the sort of opposition that was made in Parliament to the scheme of coercing America. But no idea whatever, I am satisfied, can be formed of the powers of Lord North, or even of Thurlow and Wedderburn, — in short, of the pleasantry, the arguments, and the eloquence by which the ministerial system was recommended (and successfully) to the approbation of the country gentlemen and the independent members of the lower house of Parliament. I do not say that we have no debates left, and that we have no opportunities of instructing ourselves amid the reasoning of our statesmen and legislators; but I say that they are not at all what we might have expected, and not at all what they should have been in a civilized nation and under a free government like ours. We must make, indeed, the best of our materials; and I shall endeavour to do so immediately. But I thought it necessary to apprise you of what I have felt a most disagreeable disappointment when looking round for information myself.

But to proceed with regard to the books you may have recourse to. The first great magazine of information which may be mentioned is the *Remembrancer*, a work of twenty volumes,\* comprehending all the documents relative to the American contest that could be collected at the time by a London bookseller, Almon. Almon, however, was an opposition bookseller; the *Remembrancer* therefore remembers chiefly such letters, speeches, and publications as serve to display the injustice of the designs and the folly of the councils of Great Britain. The whole must be examined thoroughly by all who are to write upon the subject of the American war; but as there is an index of contents, I would rather advise the student to have recourse to the work when other works have been considered, and when he has become a judge of what is or is not important. What he should look for is such local and appropriate information from America as cannot find a place in the regular histories he reads. The first volume, containing what are called *Prior Documents*, from 1764 to 1775, should be examined: though most of them will have occurred in other places, there are some that would not readily be met with elsewhere. The earlier parts of a contest are always the most instructive.

The *History of Gordon*, in four thick octavo volumes, will, in like manner, be consulted with best effect when other accounts have been

\* "In all, *seventeen* volumes; to which should be added the *Prior Documents*, published in 1777," in one volume. Rich's *Bibliotheca Americana Nova*, (London, 1835,) p. 210. — N.



perused. The author appears to have had access to good sources of information; and the work is an immense assemblage of facts, presented to the reader with little or no comment, and with great impartiality. In this instance, as in the former, I would advise you to select from the index such parts as may be important, and you will sometimes be rewarded, though you will often think the account given very short and inadequate to its subject. The first volume is the most curious, as entering more minutely into all the views and reasonings of the American patriots, — into all the local politics, contests with the governors, and petty, but serious, irritations which took place in America prior to the commencement of hostilities. The work, too, is valuable as confirming, by its simple and plain statements, the conclusions which would be drawn from other and better histories respecting very important points, — the distresses of Washington, the injurious effects of the depreciation of the paper money, the vain attempts of Congress to encounter them by the operation of laws, &c., &c. On the whole, Gordon's appears to me a history that has been made much use of, though it is in fact superseded by the superior and more concise History of Ramsay.

Jefferson's History of Virginia is always recommended, but it is merely what might be expected from its title, and is little to our present purpose.

Morse's Geography will supply you with information respecting the particular States of America, their history, more appropriate advantages, and separate constitutions. It is a common book, and will be of use.

Franklin's Works will be found very entertaining and instructive, particularly part of his Life, written by himself, and every thing that relates to America and the subjects of political economy: for example, his Letters to Governor Shirley, which contain the first predictions on the subject of American taxation, so early as 1754; and a remarkable paper printed in January, 1768, where the American case is calmly and well stated, much upon the same principles and in the same spirit with Burke's celebrated speeches; and a letter, not less reasonable, of an earlier date, and therefore more important, in January, 1766. This letter was intended to show that the Stamp Act should be repealed, &c., &c. Franklin's very remarkable examination, in February, 1766, before the British Parliament, so creditable to him, may be found also in these volumes, with other curious documents which I have not now time even to enumerate. The powerful understanding of Franklin, in the very peculiar circumstances of America, made him a person of such consequence, that every thing relating either to him or his publications becomes a subject of history. The editor of the present work intimates that writings of his have been prevented from seeing the light by the management of particular persons in this country. Since I drew up these lectures, a quarto

volume of his correspondence has been published; another is expected. It was agreeable to me to find that his entertaining and instructive letters, as far as our present subject was concerned, only confirmed what I had already written.

You will sometimes see the work of Chalmers referred to. It is an immense, heavy, tedious book, to explain the legal history of the different colonies of America. It should be consulted on all such points. It goes down to the Revolution of 1688. But it is impossible to read it. The leaves, however, should be turned over, for curious particulars often occur, and the nature of the first settlement and original laws of each colony should be known. The last chapter, indeed, ought to be read. The right to tax the colonies became a great point of dispute. Chalmers means to show that the sovereignty of the British Parliament existed over America, because the settlers, though emigrants, were still English subjects, and members of the empire.

Such are the books that may be *consulted*, as in themselves important and connected with the general subject. I now proceed to propose to you such a course of reading as may be gone through, — first, on a larger scale, next, on a smaller.

In the first place, the debates in Parliament may be looked at. Many important documents are there to be met with; and these, and some of the speeches of the celebrated men on each side of the House should be read. The protest, for instance, in the Lords, on the repeal of the Stamp Act, is the best statement I have seen of the views and reasonings of those who *supported* the system of American taxation.

Secondly, there is a History of the American War by Stedman. Stedman served in the British army during the war.

Thirdly, there is a history of the American contest by Dr. Ramsay, who was himself a member of Congress.

Fourthly, some of the letters of Washington to Congress were published.

Fifthly, a Life of Washington, by Marshall.

These I select as books that contain original information, and should be read.

From the pamphlets that have appeared, I select, in like manner, Paine's Common Sense, — the Tracts of Dean Tucker, — two pamphlets by Robinson, afterwards Lord Rokeby, — the speeches printed by Burke, — and the pamphlet of Dr. Johnson, Taxation no Tyranny.

They who are not at leisure to examine these books and pamphlets will find the volumes of the Annual Register an excellent substitute for them all. They contain, in the most concise form, the most able, impartial, and authentic history of the dispute which can be found. The account is understood to have been drawn up by Burke, and if so, (and there is no doubt of it,) the arguments on each side are displayed with an impartiality that is quite admirable.



Lastly, from these works and from others have been drawn up the histories of Adolphus and Belsham. These histories may be read by those who can read no more, but they must neither of them be read separately or without the other. They are drawn up on very different principles: — Belsham conceiving that the Americans were right in their resistance; Adolphus thinking, certainly wishing his readers to think, that they were entirely wrong: the one written on what are called Whig, and the other on Tory, principles of government. The one is, I conceive, sometimes too indulgent to the Congress; the other always so to the English ministry. Belsham I consider as by far the most reasonable of the two in every thing that is laid down respecting the American war. The objectionable passages in Adolphus I found so many, that, after taking notes for the purpose, I saw them swell to such a size, that all comment of this kind appeared to me in a lecture quite impossible, and you must learn to comment upon them yourselves, as I have done, by the perusal of better writers. The merit of Adolphus is, that he puts the reader very fairly in possession of the views and arguments of Lord Chatham and others, who opposed the system that, in defiance of them, he himself espouses.

I should expect, then, on the whole, that these two, Belsham and Adolphus, and the particular parts of the Annual Register, would at least be read by every one who hears me. Ramsay should next be added, — his History is short, — and, if possible, much of the fourth and fifth volumes of Marshall. Burke's speeches will of course be read; and any pamphlet that was written by such a man as Dr. Johnson. Lord Chatham was so considerable a personage during this period, that the life of him which has been published, which is at least the best account of him and his speeches that we have, should by no means be overlooked.

And here I might, perhaps, leave the subject, having endeavoured to excite your curiosity, and pointed out the best means I know of gratifying it. Aware, too, that all proper instruction will be offered to you by the works I have mentioned, the rest must be labor and reflection on your part; and you must become wiser and better, on this occasion, as on others, (a sentiment, this, I have often expressed to you,) by the faithful exertion and virtuous use of the talents and opportunities intrusted to your disposal. I am, however, not satisfied without attempting to do more than I have yet done, — without attempting to assist you in shaping out this instruction into a few distinct and palpable masses. Many of you who hear me may be destined to have influence hereafter; as men of education, you can none of you be entirely without it; and neither the world nor our own island is in a state, as I have before intimated, to admit of any indolence or ignorance on political subjects in those who ought to be the efficient members of the community.

I shall therefore, in the first place, comment upon the principles and measures of the supporters of the American war on this side of the Atlantic; then, on the other side of the Atlantic; next, on the conduct of the war itself; in the last place, on the people of America. Many lessons may, no doubt, be drawn from each; many more than have occurred to me; many more than I can here conveniently lay before you: what, however, appear to me of the most importance I will select and state to you.

North America, as you know, was peopled and civilized chiefly by adventurers from this country; that is, in a word, England was the parent, and America the dependent state. I have already made observations on the connections of different states with each other; I did so in my lecture on the Union with Scotland. These observations it would be very convenient to me, if I could on this occasion recall to your recollection. The sum and substance, however, of them was, that, in such a case as this before us, in the case of a mother country and colonies, an ultimate separation of the two was the result to which the progress of the prosperity of the dependent state naturally tended; that, as in the relation of parent and child, helplessness is to be succeeded by strength, strength by maturity, maturity by independence, so in states and empires issuing from each other, new sentiments and new duties are to arise from the changing situation of the parties; and that it is the business and the wisdom of the parent state, more particularly, to conform without a murmur to those eternal laws which have ordained a constant progress in all things, and which have decreed that nations, like individuals, are no longer to require from youth and from manhood the blind and unconditional submission which is connected with the imbecility and inexperience of the infant and the child; that by skill and forbearance this ultimate separation may be protracted to the benefit of the mother country, but that the separation itself must always be kept in view as an issue at length inevitable; and that the euthanasia of the connection is an affectionate intercourse of good offices, an alliance of more than ordinary sympathy and sincerity, and a gradual transmutation of the notions of protection and submission, of supremacy and allegiance, into those of interchanged regard and respect, into those of a sense of common interest in the friendship and kindness and growing prosperity of each other. Such must always be the philosophy of the case when the colonies can ever, by their extent and natural fertility, be advanced into any situation imitating that of the son to the father in the relations of social life. In the one case as in the other, much unhappiness may be caused, much injury may arise, both to the parent and to the child, by a want of good temper and compliance with the ordinances of nature; but the wisdom which these ordinances point out is at all times the same, equally obvious and indispensable.

Now the case of America and England was one precisely of this



nature. America in extent boundless, in natural advantages unexampled, removed to a distance from the mother country, how was it possible that the natural tendency of things, in all other cases, should, in this particular case of America and England, cease to operate? To what end, indeed, or purpose, as far as the best interests of either, or the great interests of humanity and the world, were concerned? Why was a great continent, a country of lakes into which our island might be thrown and buried, of forests which might overshadow our principalities and kingdoms, of falls and cataracts which might sweep away our cities, and of descending seas to which our noblest streams might in comparison be thought but rivulets and brooks, — why was such a country, which the God of nature had clothed with all his highest forms of magnificence and grandeur, — why was such a country, though, in the mysterious dispensations of his providence, it was to be raised into existence by an island in the Old World, — why was it to be impeded in its career by the manacles that were to be thrown over its giant limbs by the selfishness of its parent? — why prevented from rushing on in its destined race, to become itself the new world, as Europe had been the old, teeming with the life and glowing with the business of human society, and doubling, trebling, multiplying to an indefinite extent the number of sentient beings to which our planet may give support? — why prevented from journeying on with all the accumulating resources of its independent strength, till the same progress of things which had thus ripened the colony into a kingdom, and a kingdom into the new Europe of the western hemisphere, should have advanced the planet itself to its final consummation, and the labors and the grandeur and the happiness of man, on this side the grave, should be no more?

There surely could be no reason, either on any general system of benevolence or on any practical scheme of human policy, why these great laws of our particular portion of the universe should not be cheerfully acquiesced in by any intelligent statesman, — should not be patiently submitted to, as a matter of necessity, by every practical politician in the parent state. What other hope, what possible alternative, presented itself? Stay the sun in his course, because he has warmed the nations of the Atlantic till they are no longer dependent on our bounty! — arrest the principles of increase and decay, because they no longer appear to operate to our particular aggrandizement! Vain and hopeless efforts! Rather turn the opportunities and indulgences of nature which yet remain to their best advantage; far better to be grateful to the Author of all good for blessings past and to come; and not, from a blind, preposterous, unschooled, and irreverent ambition, fret and struggle where it is in vain to contend, and perhaps hurry on, a century or two before their time, all those evils of comparative decline and decreasing power which are now terrifying your imagination, and interrupting all the regular conclusions of the

understanding. Protract, if you please, by all the expedients of mild government, the day of separation ; but to endeavour to adjourn it for ever, and that by force, is ridiculous, for it is in the very nature of things impossible.

Views of this kind should certainly have presented themselves to our statesmen soon after the middle of the last century. It was not necessary that they should be displayed in their speeches in Parliament, or in their conversation in private society. But, assuredly, they should have been present to their minds when they came to speculate in their closets, and still more when they came to advise their sovereign in his cabinet. Great caution, and a most conciliatory system of government from England to America, would, no doubt, have been the result ; no high assertions of authority either in theory or in practice ; no search into dormant claims ; no statements and adjustments of rights and duties, before uncertain and undefined ; no agitation of perilous questions of supremacy and obedience ; no experiments of legislation for the exclusive benefit of the parent state ; in short, nothing that should disturb that general tendency which may be observed in mankind to retain their habits of thinking and acting (all these would have been in favor of the mother country) long after the reasons in which they originated have ceased to exist.

Had sentiments of this kind influenced the councils of Great Britain soon after the accession of his present Majesty to the throne, it is impossible to say how long the two countries might have slumbered on in a long-established system of generous superintendence on the one side, and habitual confidence and duty on the other. Many think the French Revolution would not have happened, had not the American preceded it ; but, at all events, the connection between England and her colonies might have been long protracted by a philosophic policy of the kind I have described ; we should at least have avoided the folly of an opposite system, and of producing before its time the event we dreaded.

But we must now turn aside from those general views and great laws and principles of nature, which statesmen, amid their humbler details and more minute contrivances for the interest of their communities, ought never to lose sight of, and we must descend all at once to the miserable, mortifying, melancholy facts of our dispute with America. I will describe this dispute in a few sentences.

We conclude a triumphant peace with the house of Bourbon in 1763. The French are obliged to abandon America, and all Europe is jealous of our present and apprehensive of our future prosperity ; and this happy state of things no sooner takes place, America and ourselves are no sooner in a situation to enjoy and urge to the utmost the prosperity of each other, than what is the consequence ? Acts are drawn up by the British Parliament to enforce restrictions on the trade of the colonies, — to put an end to what was denominated their



smuggling trade. The greatest irritation and considerable injury are thus occasioned; the mother country appears no longer the protectress and nurse of their prosperity. This is the first specimen I have to mention of our statesmen, and the next is this: — a resolution is actually formed to draw a revenue from America by the authority of the British Parliament, which revenue, however small on its first introduction, might afterwards, when the precedent was once established, be increased, as it was very obvious, to any extent which the same British Parliament might think proper. This is the second specimen; the rest is in due order. When this measure is resisted by America, as might have been expected, troops are sent from England to insist upon obedience. The sword is actually drawn; from year to year the contest is maintained; our rivals and enemies at length openly join the cause of the Americans; and the result of the whole is, that, after a bloody and most perilous struggle, we are obliged to acknowledge the independence of our colonies, and be very well satisfied that we have been able to maintain our own independence and support our own national consequence against the world.

But what a drama, what a tragedy, what a long spectacle of impolicy, is thus in a few words described! What solution are we to produce for such miserable infatuation in the most enlightened nation on earth, at the close of the eighteenth century?

“The whole of your political conduct,” said Lord Chatham, when addressing the ministers of the country in February, 1775, “has been one continued series of weakness, temerity, despotism, ignorance, futility, negligence, blundering, and the most notorious servility, incapacity, and corruption.”

“These ministers,” said his son, the late Mr. Pitt, at a subsequent period, “will destroy the empire they are called upon to save, before the indignation of a great and suffering people can fall upon their heads in the punishment which they deserve. — I affirm the war to have been a most accursed, wicked, barbarous, cruel, unnatural, unjust, and diabolical war.”

Yet were these ministers, the advisers and supporters of this war, as individuals, men of education and ability. Lord North was the delight of every private society which he honored with his presence, and in the senate appeared in every respect fitted for his situation, as far as natural talents were concerned; second to none in the powers of conducting a debate, unrivalled in the possession of a most inexhaustible fund of elegant pleasantry, and of a temper that was always the last to be ruffled and the first to be appeased. In both houses, they who resisted the impolitic system of American coercion were for several years left on every occasion in the most insignificant minorities, and the war was supported by a clear and ardent majority of every division of the community, — with, perhaps, the exception,

for some time, of a part of the manufacturers and merchants, those who found their trade interrupted, and were afraid of losing what they had lent to the American merchants.

Now this, on the whole, appears to me a case well fitted to excite your inquiries. What are the causes that can be mentioned as having produced such unhappy effects on this side of the Atlantic? I will offer to your consideration such as have occurred to me. I will mention first those that were natural and not discreditable to us, then those that *were* discreditable.

Of the first kind, then, was a general notion in the English people that their cause was just. The sovereignty was supposed to be in the parent state; in the rights of sovereignty were included the rights of taxation: England, too, was considered as having protected the Americans from the French in the war that had been lately concluded. The Americans, therefore, when they resisted the mother country in her attempt to tax them, were considered on the first account as rebellious, and on the second as ungrateful.

The sentiment, then, of the contest, as far as it was honorable to the inhabitants of this country, originated in the considerations just mentioned. But this sentiment would have produced no such effect as the American war, had it not been excited and exasperated by other considerations, which I shall now lay before you, and which were not creditable to us. These I shall endeavour to illustrate in the ensuing lectures, because they were such as I think you may yourselves be exposed to the influence of, hereafter, and their operation can never be favorable to the interests of your country. Of the first which I have mentioned, the supposed right of taxation, I shall now say no more, but shall allude finally to it before I advert to the conduct of the war. The ministers and people of England might neither *mean* to be, nor *be*, the tyrants and oppressors which they were thought by the people of America; but whether they were as reasonable and prudent, or even as well justified, in their measures of taxation, much less of coercion, as they supposed, is quite another question. It is this last part of the general subject, that which is discreditable to us, that I shall for some time more particularly place in your view. I may thus appear to some only an advocate for the American cause. I am not so; but I am anxious to show you the unpardonable mistakes that were made by the statesmen and people of Great Britain, that you may be the better able to avoid such mistakes yourselves.

Turning, then, at present, from the causes first mentioned, an opinion in the people of England that the Americans were rebellious and ungrateful, and alluding to the causes that were less honorable in the sentiment, and that were discreditable to us, and that operated so fatally to the reduction and exasperation of the American contest, the first was, I think, a deplorable ignorance of or inattention to the



great leading principles of political economy. The result of this ignorance or inattention was an indisposition to listen to the arguments of those who laid down, from time to time, and explained the proper manner in which colonies might become sources of revenue to the mother country, — not by means of taxes and taxgatherers, but by the interchange of their appropriate products, and by the exertions of the real revenue officers of every country, the merchants, farmers, and manufacturers. This was one of what I consider as the discreditable causes of the war on our part.

Secondly, A very blind and indeed disgraceful selfishness, in the mere matter of money and payment of taxes; this was another. It was hence that the country gentlemen of the House of Commons, and the landed interest of England, had actually the egregious folly to support ministers in their scheme of coercing America, from an expectation that their own burdens, their land-tax, for instance, might be made lighter, or at least prevented from becoming heavier.

• Thirdly, An overweening national pride, not operating in its more honorable direction to beat off invaders, or repel the approach of insult or injustice, but in making us despise our enemy, vilify the American character, and suppose that nothing could stand opposed to our own good pleasure, or resist the valor of our fleets and armies.

Fourthly, Very high principles of government: a disposition to push too far the rights of authority, — to insist too sternly on the expediency of control, — to expect the duty of submission to laws without much inquiry into the exact reasonableness of their enactments. These high principles of government operated very fatally, when the question was, whether Great Britain could not only claim, but actually exercise, sovereignty over the colonies of America; whether the people of America could be constitutionally taxed by the Parliament of Great Britain, a Parliament in which it could have no representatives.

Fifthly, A certain vulgarity of thinking on political subjects, — narrow, and what will commonly be found popular, notions in national concerns. In these last few words I might, perhaps, at once comprehend all the causes I have already mentioned. It was thus that men like Mr. Burke, who drew their reasonings from philosophic principles of a general nature, were not comprehended or were disregarded, while the most commonplace declaimer was applauded, and decided the different issues of the dispute.

Such were, I think, the causes, discreditable to us, which, without entering into any metaphysical niceties, may be said in a general manner to have led to the destruction of the British empire in America, as far as the legislators and people of England were concerned. I will recapitulate them, because I mean to illustrate them in the ensuing lectures, on account of what I fancy to be their importance;

and I shall illustrate them, not by selecting and endeavouring to discuss and decide upon the different arguments and events that this contest produced, — this you must do yourselves, — but by reading passages from speeches and pamphlets, so as to give you, if possible, in a very short compass, the spirit of the whole ; but you must have the causes I have mentioned well infixed in your memory, that you may continually see the application of what I am reading, for I cannot stay to point it out. The causes, then, that I have mentioned were (those that were *discreditable* to us, I mean) an ignorance of political economy ; a mere blind, disgraceful money selfishness ; an overweening national pride ; high principles of government ; and a certain vulgarity of thinking on political subjects.

Before I proceed, I must stop to observe that it would now be very convenient to me, if I could consider you as already acquainted with the facts of this American dispute ; but as I know not that I can exactly presume upon this, you will be pleased to remember the following points, which I mention to render more intelligible the illustrations I am going to give of the positions I have laid down.

First, then, Mr. George Grenville proposed to tax America in March, 1764, and in February, 1765, carried his measure to that effect, the famous Stamp Act. A great sensation was occasioned in America ; but in June, 1765, Mr. Grenville went out of office, and the Rockingham administration came in. They *repealed* the Stamp Act early in the year 1766 ; but they passed at the same time a declaratory bill, to assert the *right* of Great Britain to bind the colonies in all cases whatsoever.

Here the dispute might to all appearance have terminated, but this ministry, being a Whig ministry, was, as Charles Townshend observed, but a lutestring administration, and destined only to last through the spring. In July, 1766, as he had predicted, they were dismissed. He himself came into office, and on some account or other revived the idea of the taxation of America.

During the illness and inefficiency of Lord Chatham, who was the apparent head of the administration, certain duties were laid upon tea, among other articles : this happened in the year 1767. The Duke of Grafton and others then in the cabinet were guilty, not of advising these measures, but, what is the same thing on very important occasions, were guilty of not throwing up their places, when their opinions were overruled. America was again greatly agitated. In 1770, Lord North brought in his bill to repeal these duties ; but he retained the duty on tea, that he might thus practically assert the right which Great Britain unfortunately continued to claim, the right of taxing America.

Disturbances followed in the province of Massachusetts, — violent disturbances ; and General Gage, with a strong military force, was stationed at Boston, where the resistance had been the most outrageous :



at length Boston was shut up as a port. This happened in 1774. The Americans hovered round General Gage; the note of preparation of war, as he thought, sounded in his ears. He sent a detachment into the interior, to seize or destroy some military stores, and the first blood was shed in the affair at Lexington, in April, 1775.

In June, 1775, the American intrenchment on Bunker's or Breed's Hill was forced, but not till half the detachment sent on the service lay killed or wounded on the field. Boston was afterwards evacuated. In 1776, General Howe took possession of New York; and at one interval, the American General Washington seemed scarcely able to maintain before him the appearance of a regular army. But in the autumn of 1777, General Burgoyne and a royal army were totally captured, and this event induced the French to join the Americans early in 1778. Another royal army under Lord Cornwallis was in consequence captured also, in October, 1781. All idea of conquering America was then, in fact, abandoned, the ministry was at length changed, the peace was made, and the American States were acknowledged independent in 1783.

On the part of the Americans, you will observe that the first meeting of Congress was in September, 1774. They issued declarations; drew up addresses to the king, the people of Great Britain, and the people of Canada; then adjourned, and again met in May, 1775. In July, 1776, they declared themselves independent.

Such are a few of the leading facts of this memorable contest.

I will now endeavour to exemplify what I have been laying down. I turn first to the debates of Parliament.

It is remarkable enough, that the first mention of the Americans which occurs after the accession of his Majesty appears in a message from the king, recommending a proper compensation to be made to them for their expenses during the great war of 1756, expenses which must therefore have been thought more than proportionate to their natural ability, — a message highly creditable both to the parent state and to the colonies. A few pages intervene, and then appear among the ways and means of the session the unfortunate resolutions of Mr. George Grenville, in March, 1764, which laid the foundation for the subsequent civil war. In a few words was contained the fatal resolve that tore asunder the empire of Great Britain, — “That towards further defraying the said expenses, it may be proper to charge certain stamp duties in the said colonies and plantations.” Memorable words! This was in 1764; and in a year after, in the spring of 1765, this resolution was formed into a law, which was called the Stamp Act. In his Majesty's speech at the end of the same year, in 1765, almost the first words that occur are these, — “Matters of importance have lately occurred in some of my colonies in America.” Matters of importance, no doubt! America had resisted.

Mr. Grenville, the original mover of the taxation of America, was now no longer in power; but his speech in defence of the measure, and of his system, still remains; so does that of the first Mr. Pitt, in opposition to both. I shall quote largely from these two; for they contain all the important arguments, and may serve as specimens of the whole subject, and certainly of the reasonings that were then urged on the one side and on the other. The success of Mr. Grenville's reasonings illustrates, as I conceive, the positions I have laid down. It had been contended, you will observe, that taxes might be laid externally by Great Britain, to regulate trade, — duties, for instance, on imports and exports, — but not *internally*, to raise revenue.

"I cannot understand," said Mr. Grenville, "the difference between external and internal taxes; they are the same in effect, and only differ in name. That this kingdom has the sovereign, the supreme, legislative power over America is granted; it cannot be denied: and taxation is a part of that sovereign power. It is one branch of the legislation. It is, it has been, exercised over those who are not, who were never, represented. It is exercised over the India Company, the merchants of London, the proprietors of the stocks, and over many great manufacturing towns. It was exercised over the palatinate of Chester, and the bishopric of Durham, before they sent any representatives to Parliament. . . . Great Britain protects America; America is bound to yield obedience. If not, tell me when the Americans were emancipated. . . . The nation has run itself into an immense debt to give them their protection; and now they are called upon to contribute a small share towards the public expense, an expense arising from themselves, they renounce your authority, insult your officers, and break out, I might almost say, into open rebellion. The seditious spirit of the colonies owes its birth to the factions in this house. Gentlemen are careless of the consequences of what they say, provided it answers the purposes of opposition. . . . I have been abused in all the public papers as an enemy to the trade of America. . . . I discouraged no trade but what was illicit, what was prohibited by act of Parliament."

The great orator of England rose in reply. "I have been charged," said Mr. Pitt, "with giving birth to sedition in America. . . . Sorry I am to hear the liberty of speech in this house imputed as a crime; but the imputation shall not discourage me. It is a liberty I mean to exercise; no gentleman ought to be afraid to exercise it. It is a liberty by which the gentleman who calumniates it might have profited; he ought to have profited; he ought to have desisted from his project.

"The gentleman tells us, America is obstinate, America is almost in open rebellion. I rejoice that America has resisted. Three millions of people so dead to all the feelings of liberty as voluntarily to submit



to be slaves would have been fit instruments to make slaves of the rest. . . . .

"Why did the gentleman confine himself to Chester and Durham? He might have taken a higher example in Wales, — Wales, that never was taxed by Parliament till it was incorporated. . . . . The gentleman tells us of many who are taxed, and are not represented, — the India Company, merchants, stockholders, manufacturers. Surely, many of these are represented in other capacities, as owners of land, or as freemen of boroughs. It is a misfortune that more are not actually represented; but they are all inhabitants, and, as such, are virtually represented. Many have it in their option to be actually represented; they have connections with those that elect, and they have influence over them. . . . .

"The gentleman boasts of his bounties to America! Are not those bounties intended finally for the benefit of this kingdom? . . . . .

"If the gentleman does not understand the difference between internal and external taxes, I cannot help it; but there is a plain distinction between taxes levied for the purposes of raising a revenue, and duties imposed for the regulation of trade, for the accommodation of the subject; although, in the consequences, some revenue might incidentally arise from the latter.

"The gentleman asks, When were the colonies emancipated? But I desire to know when they were made slaves. . . . . The profits to Great Britain from the trade of the colonies, through all its branches, is two millions a year. . . . . This is the price that America pays you for her protection. And shall a miserable financier come with a boast that he can fetch a peppercorn into the *exchequer*, to the loss of millions to the *nation*? . . . . .

"The whole commercial system of America may be altered to advantage. . . . . You have but two nations to trade with in America; would you had twenty! Let acts of Parliament in consequence of treaties remain; but let not an English minister become a custom-house officer for Spain, or for any foreign power. . . . .

"In a good cause, on a sound bottom, the force of this country can crush America to atoms. I know the valor of your troops; I know the skill of your officers. . . . . But on this ground, on the Stamp Act, when so many here will think it a crying injustice, I am one who will lift up my hands against it. In such a cause your success would be hazardous. America, if she fell, would fall like the strong man; she would embrace the pillars of the state, and pull down the constitution along with her. . . . .

"The Americans have not acted in all things with prudence and temper. They have been wronged; they have been driven to madness by injustice. Will you punish them for the madness you have occasioned? Rather let prudence and temper come first from this side; I will undertake for America that she will follow the example. . . . .

“Be to her faults a little blind;  
Be to her virtues very kind.”

“Upon the whole, I will beg leave to tell the House what is really my opinion. It is, that the Stamp Act be repealed, absolutely, totally, and immediately; that the reason for the repeal be assigned, because it was founded on an erroneous principle. At the same time, let the sovereign authority of this country over the colonies be asserted in as strong terms as can be devised, and be made to extend to every point of legislation whatsoever: that we may bind their trade, confine their manufactures, and exercise every power whatsoever, except that of taking their money out of their pockets without their consent.”

Such is a slight outline of what the greatest of our orators is understood to have delivered on this critical occasion. Now the sentiments that were popular, and the opinions that were thought wise, were not those of Mr. Pitt, but of Mr. Grenville: and it is on *this* account that I have thought it necessary to endeavour to explain the small views and mercenary, unworthy, and unconstitutional feelings of the English people and their statesmen at this particular time; holding them up as a warning to ourselves, from a very strong suspicion, which, I must confess, I entertain, that, on any similar occasion, our own views and feelings would be equally wanting in true philosophy, and in proper sympathy with the genuine doctrines even of our own constitutional liberty.

The positions I have laid down are still further illustrated, because it must be observed, that the ministers and people of England had sufficient information and sufficient warning from a few of the more enlightened members of both houses, and from other sources.

“When the resolution,” says Mr. Pitt, so early as December, 1765,\* “was taken in the House to tax America, I was ill in bed. If I could have endured to have been carried in my bed, so great was the agitation of my mind for the consequences, I would have solicited some kind hand to have laid me down on this floor, to have borne my testimony against it.”

This was said by Lord Chatham, I must repeat, so early as December, 1765,\* — not 1775, when the troubles had broken out: and so early as February, 1766, ten years *before* the declaration of independence, Dr. Franklin was examined at the bar of the House, and he declared (I quote from his answers) that the authority of Parliament was allowed to be valid in all laws, except such as should lay internal taxes: that it was never disputed in laying duties to regulate commerce: that the Americans would never submit to the Stamp Act, or to any other tax on the same principle: that North America would contribute to the support of Great Britain, if engaged in a war in Europe.

The whole of this examination is worth reading. The Doctor

\* Jan. 14, 1766. See Hansard's Parliamentary History, xvi. 98. — N.



seems to have judged accurately, and to have given the House very seasonable advice on all the critical points which could then have divided the opinions of his hearers ; but the advice was vain, and this, I conceive, from the causes which I have enumerated.

In 1766, the Stamp Act was repealed by the Rockingham administration, — the Whig administration, — and the dispute, in truth, put an end to ; they were therefore dismissed ; and when the idea of taxing America was revived by Charles Townshend, so early as May, 1767, Governor Pownall declared, that “it was a fact which the House ought to be apprised of in all its extent, that the people of America, universally, unitedly, and unalterably, were resolved not to submit to any internal tax imposed upon them, by any legislature in which they had not a share by representatives of their own election.” “Does ministry,” said he, “mean to propose the measure of imposing taxes on the colonies, and to force into execution the collection of them ? The whole system of the state government and interwoven interest of the colonies is gone too far for *that* to be *practicable*. . . . . We must reëstablish our system on its *old* basis.” Governor Pownall, it must be observed, had been a governor in America, and always spoke from personal knowledge.

“I prophesied,” says Colonel Barré, “on passing the Stamp Act, [in 1765,] what would happen thereon ; and I now, [in March, 1769,] I now fear I can prophesy further troubles ; that, if the people are made desperate, finding no remedy from Parliament, the whole continent will be in arms immediately, and perhaps those provinces lost to England for ever.” This was in March, 1769, and certainly a very remarkable prediction.

In February, 1769, “The Americans,” said Governor Pownall, “do universally, invariably, and unalterably declare, that they ought not to submit to any internal taxes imposed upon them by any legislature wherein they have not representatives of their own election.” “The slightest circumstance,” he continued, “would, in a moment, throw every thing into confusion and bloodshed ; and if some mode of policy does not interpose to remove this exertion of military power, the union between Great Britain and North America is broken for ever ; unless, what is worse, both are united in one common ruin. . . . . No military force can assess or collect ; it may raise a contribution by military execution, — but that is not government, it is war.” And again, “If you attempt to force taxes against the spirit of the people there, you will find, when perhaps it is too late, that they are of a spirit which will resist all force, which will grow stronger by being forced, will prove superior to all force, and ever has been unconquerable. . . . . That spirit, which led their ancestors to break off from every thing which is near and dear to the human heart, . . . . has but a slight and trifling sacrifice to make at this time : they have not to quit their native country, but to defend

it; they have not to forsake their friends and relations, but to unite with and to stand by them in one common union. . . . . They will abominate as sincerely as they now love you. . . . . In one word, if this spirit of fanaticism should once arise upon the idea of persecution, those people, whom Great Britain hath to this hour drawn as it were with a thread, and whom it has governed with a little paper and packthread, you will not for the future be able to govern it with a rod of iron; and every benefit which this country has derived from that country will be stopped at every source. If it be not the humor of the House to believe this at present, I only beg they will remember it has been said, and that they are forewarned of it."

The House was impatient, it seems, (what are we to say of the folly of such impatience?) while this member of their body, with the wisdom of a statesman, and the spirit of a prophet, proceeded to warn them of their mistakes, and represent to them the conduct which they were bound in justice and in policy to pursue. It was in vain that he concluded with these memorable words: — "Resume again the spirit of your old policy. . . . . Do nothing which may bring into discussion questions of right. . . . . Go into no innovations in practice, and suffer no encroachments on government. Extend not the power which you have of imposing taxes to the laying internal taxes on the colonies. Continue to exercise the power which you have already exercised, of laying subsidies, imposts, and duties; but exercise this, as you have always hitherto done, with prudence and moderation, and directed by the spirit of commercial wisdom. . . . . Exert the spirit of policy, that you may not ruin the colonies and yourselves by exerting force."

Mr. Pitt spoke to the same effect, and denied the right of the mother country to tax America.

"There is no medium to be observed," said George Grenville (this was in March, 1769); "we must either resolve strictly to execute the revenue laws in America, or else with a good grace give up our right entirely." — "There is a proper medium," said Mr. Burke; "we have an undoubted right to tax them, but the expediency of putting that right in execution should be very evident before any thing of that sort be passed."

In May,\* 1769, Governor Pownall most wisely moved to repeal the revenue acts in North America. He insisted on the wisdom of the old system, the folly of the experiment of the new one, that of internal taxation. "Matters," said he, "are now brought to a crisis at which they never will be again; if this occasion is now lost, it is lost for ever. If this session elapses with Parliament's doing nothing, American affairs will perhaps be impracticable for ever after." — This was in May,\* 1769. — "You may exert power over, but you can never

\* Hansard (Parl. Hist.) leaves the date uncertain; but an entry in the Commons Journals (xxxii. 421), apparently referring to this matter, places it on the 19th of



govern, an unwilling people ; they will be able to obstruct and pervert every effort of your policy. — Their obedience is now, at this crisis, at the very lowest point that it ever will be. On the other hand, your power is now at its height. — If you endeavour to press them down but one hair's breadth lower, like a spring they will fly all to pieces, and they will never be brought to the same point again." He argued in vain, — for, though the House seemed affected by his reasonings, the ministers talked of the late time of the session, and the governor's motion was put off.

In 1770, Lord North moved the repeal of several offensive duties ; but retained the tea tax, to evidence the right. It was in vain that Governor Pownall and others remonstrated that this would leave the merchants of America still in a state of hostility with us, resorting to their non-importation associations ; that the *right* of taxation, not the quantity of the tax, was the point of interest to them. "The merchants," he said, "in America and in England are the links of the chain that binds both countries together. . . . Whatever opinion we may superficially entertain of the operation and effect of our sovereign government, *commerce*, and intercommunion of our mutual wants and supplies, is the real power and spirit of attraction which keeps us united. The operation of this has been and is at present suspended. The repeal of the whole of this act, which relates to the laying duties for the purpose therein specified, will alone take off this suspension, and cement again our union by the best and surest principle. The getting back to this intercommunion will give us grounds of agreement, and may, upon those grounds, lead again to that happy spirit of government, under which the people knew no bounds to their confidence, no scruples in their obedience, and under which government led the people almost by enchantment."

But in whatever point of view this subject could be placed, and on every different occasion, the effect was the same. It was determined to insist on the taxation of America.

In April, 1774, "I know," said Colonel Barré, "the vast superiority of your disciplined troops over the provincials ; but beware how you supply the want of discipline by desperation. . . . Ask their aid in a constitutional manner, and they will give it to the utmost of their ability ; they never yet refused it, when properly required. . . . What madness is it that prompts you to attempt obtaining that by force which you may more certainly procure by requisition ? They may be flattered into any thing, but they are too much like yourselves to be *driven*. Have some indulgence for your own likeness ; respect their sturdy English virtue ; retract your odious exertions of authori-

April ; and this is confirmed by a passage in a letter from Dr. Franklin to Dr. Cooper, of Boston, dated London, 27 April, 1769 : — "Your late governor, Mr. Pownall, . . . moved *last week* for a repeal of the acts, . . . but did not succeed. A friend has favored me with a copy of the notes taken of Mr. Pownall's speech." Works, ed. Sparks, vii. 438-442. — N.

ty; and remember that the first step towards making them contribute to your wants is to reconcile them to your government."

Mr. Fox, then a young man, observed, that, if the tax was persisted in, the country would be forced into open rebellion. Lord North, on the contrary, that we had only to be firm and resolved, and obedience would be the result. The tea duty was therefore insisted upon by one hundred and eighty-two to forty-nine. It was insisted upon for the purposes of sovereignty and revenue, — and both sovereignty and revenue were from that moment gone for ever.

Injustice produces resistance, and one coercive measure is sure to be followed by another; the usual progress of harsh government. The province of Massachusetts had resisted, and therefore, in the April of 1774, Lord North brought in his bill for taking away the charter, and introducing a less popular form of government. "The Americans," said he, "have tarred and feathered your subjects, plundered your merchants, burnt your ships, denied all obedience to your laws and authority; yet so clement and so long-forbearing has our conduct been, that it is incumbent on us now to take a different course." But on the contrary, said Governor Pownall in reply, (observe how prophetic was this reply,) "I told this house (it is now four years past) that the people of America would resist the tax which lay then upon them; that they would not oppose power to your power, but that they would become impracticable. Have they not been so from that time to this very hour? I tell you now, that they will resist the measures now pursued in a more vigorous way. . . . . The committees of correspondence in the different provinces are in constant communication. . . . . They will next hold a conference; and to what these committees, thus met in congress, will grow up, I will not say. Should matters ever come to arms, you will hear of other officers than those appointed by your governors. When matters once come to that, it will be, as it was in the late civil wars of this country, of little consequence to dispute who were the aggressors; that will be merely matter of opinion. It is of more consequence, at this moment, so to act, to take such measures, that no such misfortune may come into event."

"My lords," said Lord Chatham, in 1774, "this country is little obliged to the framers and promoters of this tea tax. The Americans had almost forgot, in their excess of gratitude for the repeal of the Stamp Act, any interest but that of the mother country. . . . . This temper would have continued, had it not been interrupted by your fruitless endeavours to tax them without their consent. . . . . I am an old man, and would advise the noble lords in office to adopt a more gentle mode of governing America. . . . . Such proceedings will never meet their wished-for success. . . . . Instead of those harsh and severe proceedings, pass an amnesty on all their youthful errors; clasp them once more in your fond and affectionate arms;



and I will venture to affirm, you will find them children worthy of their sire. But should their turbulence exist after your proffered terms of forgiveness, which I hope and expect this house will immediately adopt, I will be among the foremost of your lordships to move for such measures as will effectually prevent a future relapse, and make them feel what it is to provoke a fond and forgiving parent, — a parent, my lords, whose welfare has ever been my greatest and most pleasing consolation. This declaration may seem unnecessary; but I will venture to declare, the period is not far distant when she will want the assistance of her most distant friends. But should the all-disposing hand of Providence prevent me from affording her my poor assistance, my prayers shall be ever for her welfare. Length of days be in her right hand, and in her left hand riches and honor! May her ways be ways of pleasantness, and all her paths be peace!”

But neither could ministers listen in one house to the excellent sense and local information of Governor Pownall, nor be moved in the other by these affecting appeals of Lord Chatham, — by these effusions of a generous and magnanimous spirit, the true and only source of all eloquence commanding as his.

I had made many other extracts to the same purport as those now given, but I omit them, for my lecture is already too long. You will look at the examination of Mr. Penn, at the speeches of Mr. Wilkes, Mr. Fuller, and others, and at the speech of Sergeant Adair, in October, 1775. I can only now refer you to them; the notices I have already taken of the debates in the houses are sufficiently strong and numerous to indicate how wise and prophetic was the general strain of those who resisted the measure of coercion and taxation, so long and so unhappily persevered in from the unfortunate dismissal of the Rockingham administration.

And why these prophecies were uttered in vain, and why this system was either originally adopted, or afterwards pursued, with the general countenance of the people of this country, can only, I think, be thoroughly explained, first, by a reference to the sentiment which I first alluded to, — an opinion that our cause was just, that the Americans were rebellious and ungrateful; and, secondly, very discreditably (to us), by a reference to such causes as I have enumerated, — ignorance of political economy, blind selfishness, national pride, high principles of government, and, on the whole, a certain vulgarity of thinking on political subjects, which if I could prepare your minds hereafter to avoid, I confess, I should consider as one of the greatest objects which these lectures could accomplish.

## LECTURE XXXII.

## AMERICAN WAR.

IN the lecture of yesterday, I endeavoured to state to you, in the first place, the interest that belongs to the subject of the American war. I next reminded you of the general principles that belong to the subject of nations connected with each other, — a parent state and colonies, for instance ; such general principles as I had submitted to your consideration when I treated of the Union with Scotland. I then enumerated to you the original works which I thought you might consult ; then those which you *might* read ; then those, lastly, which *must* be read, which are entirely indispensable.

I then proceeded to state to you what had been the causes that, as far as the ministers and people of England were concerned, had led to this important contest. The first of these causes I stated to be one not in its sentiment discreditable to us : a general notion in the English nation that their cause was just ; that the sovereignty was in the parent state ; that in this right was included the right of taxation ; and that, as we had protected the Americans from France, they were ungrateful as well as rebellious. But I then proceeded to state that this sentiment would never have produced the American war, if not excited and exasperated by other considerations. These other remaining causes of the American war I considered as very discreditable to us ; and I first stated them, and endeavoured to illustrate them by quotations from the different speeches of remarkable men at the time, in the debates of the two houses.

To-day I mean to illustrate them by a reference to a few of the best pamphlets that appeared. But you will observe, that to-day, as yesterday, I cannot stay to weigh and contrast the relative merit and value of each argument, nor can I stay to point out the application of what I am reading to the causes whose operation I am anxious to illustrate. This you must do yourselves. I think it, therefore, best on many accounts, more particularly for the accommodation of those who might be absent yesterday, and at the hazard of appearing tedious to many of those who were present, once more to state what those causes were. Those causes, I must repeat it again and again, were highly discreditable to the ministers and people of this country.

I am compelled to believe, that, if similar questions were to come before us to-morrow, we should be not much better or wiser than those who went before us. Now when we read history, we do nothing, unless we convert it to some purposes of moral discipline. It seems eternally forgotten, that men, in their collective capacity as



nations, may be, and often are, guilty of the same follies, faults, and crimes that they can commit as individuals in the common relations of social life; that they may be just as ill-humored, or resentful, or unreasonable, or ferocious, or wicked; that their good or bad passions enter with them into cabinets, and senates, and public meetings, just as they do into drawing-rooms, or studies, or their family dining-rooms. He is not likely to speak a language very agreeable, who either in the one case or the other assumes the office of a censor; but it is the proper office, not unfrequently, of a lecturer on history, for it is the great office of history itself; and therefore I shall now once more state (that you may in this and the succeeding lectures see the application of what I read) the causes which I yesterday mentioned as operating so fatally and so disgracefully to the people of Great Britain on this memorable occasion. Stated in as few words as possible, they were these:—

The first cause was an ignorance of, or inattention to, the great leading principles of political economy. Secondly, high, overweening national pride. Thirdly, a mean and unworthy money selfishness. Fourthly, high principles of government. Fifthly, a certain vulgarity of thinking on political subjects.

I now proceed to illustrate the operation of these causes by a reference to some of the pamphlets that appeared during this unhappy contest.

One of the most celebrated political writers of the time was Tucker, the Dean of Gloucester. He comes not entirely within the description I have given of the majority of the statesmen and people of England, for he was far superior to most of his contemporaries in the science of political economy. He was a zealous advocate for the system of free trade, and boldly advised that the Americans should be left to themselves, saying very wisely (very foolishly, as it was then thought), that we should have the benefit of their commerce, whether they were our colonies or not; for our skill, our industry, and our capital, he insisted, would always give us a preference in every market, and that these were the secrets of our commercial prosperity, not the bounties and drawbacks of the custom-house or the monopolies of colonization; that the Americans would be our customers, whether independent or not.

Here, however, the superior and the memorable wisdom of Tucker seems to me to have ceased. By one of those strange inconsistencies of which the human mind is capable, the same man who was penetrating and liberal, where the riches of a community were concerned, was narrow and harsh, without elevation and without refinement, where the still dearer riches of a community, the free principles of its government, were brought into question. He would have set free the American States on the genuine principles of the free system of trade, which he had adopted; but on the genuine principles of arbi-

trary rule, which he had *also* adopted, he would have bound their leaders in chains, and their patriots in links of iron. Of his Tracts, which are all worth reading, the Fourth was meant to show the wisdom of parting with the colonies entirely, and then making leagues of friendship with them as with so many independent states: a bold idea to be conceived so early as 1766,\* and very happily contrasted, for the credit of the dean, with the paltry notions on government with which his works abound.

Of the Third Tract, which is full of the notions I have taken upon me to censure, I will now endeavour to give you a specimen, as more immediately to our present purpose, and as descriptive, I have no doubt, of the reasonings of most of the people of England at that time.†

“What is it you mean,” said the dean, addressing a supposed nephew in America, “by repeating to me so often in every letter, *The spirit of the constitution?* According to this spirit, an American insists that he ought not to be taxed without his own consent, given either by himself or by a representative in Parliament chosen by himself. Why ought he not? And doth the constitution say, in so many words, that he ought not? or doth it say that every man either hath, or ought to have, or was intended to have, a vote for a member of Parliament? No, by no means; the constitution says no such thing. — ‘But the spirit of it doth.’ — But observe, Magna Charta is the basis of the English constitution. But, by the spirit of Magna Charta, all taxes laid on by Parliament are constitutional, legal taxes. Now the late tax of duties upon stamps was laid on by Parliament, and therefore, according to your own way of reasoning, must have been a regular, constitutional, legal tax.

“Let us from the spirit of the constitution come to the constitution itself. The first emigrants who settled in America were certainly English subjects, subject to the laws and jurisdiction of Parliament, and consequently to Parliamentary taxes, before their emigration; and therefore subject afterwards, unless some legal, constitutional exemption can be produced. If you have it, why do not you produce it? — ‘The king,’ you say, ‘hath granted charters of exemption to the American colonies.’ — Could he legally and constitutionally grant you such a charter? Did he ever so much as attempt to do it?

“What is it which you have next to offer? ‘O, the unreasonableness, the injustice, and the cruelty of taxing a free people, without per-

\* First printed in 1774. The date given in the text, 1766, is that of the Third Tract. Rich's Bib. Amer. Nova, p. 203. — N.

† The quotations here given from Dean Tucker are so much in the nature of a mere analysis of his Tract, that any attempt to note the breaks would greatly encumber the page, and serve only to embarrass the reader. The same remark will apply also to a large part of the extracts which follow from other authors. It is thought best, therefore, in these cases, to dispense with the usual marks of interruption. — N.



mitting them to have representatives of their own to answer for them, and to maintain their fundamental rights and privileges! — Strange, that, though the British Parliament has been from the beginning thus unreasonable, thus unjust and cruel towards you, by levying taxes on many commodities outwards and inwards, — strange that you did not discover these bad things before! And what a pity it is that you have been slaves for so many generations, and yet did not know that you were slaves until now!

“Pray what are these constitutional rights and liberties which are refused to you? You cannot have the face to assert, that, on an election day, any difference is put between the vote of a man born in America and of one born here in England. But the cause of your complaint is this, — that you live at too great a distance from the mother country to be present at our English elections. If you yourselves do choose to make it inconvenient for you to come and vote, by retiring into distant countries, what is that to us? Granting that the colonies are unrepresented in the British Parliament; so are six millions, at least, of the inhabitants of Great Britain. Yet we raise no commotions, but submit to be taxed without being represented, and taxed too, let me tell you, for your sakes. Suppose, however, an augmentation to take place in our House of Commons; our two millions represented have five hundred and fifty-eight members, and therefore our six millions unrepresented will require one thousand six hundred and seventy-four, and your two millions, five hundred and fifty-eight more; in all, two thousand seven hundred and ninety: a goodly number, truly! O the decency and order of such an assembly!

“But the complaint itself of being unrepresented is entirely false and groundless. We are all represented. Every member of Parliament represents you and me, and our public interests, in all essential points, just as much as if we had voted for him. But perhaps you will say, he will regard that most which can best promote his own interest. It may be so. What system can there be devised but may be attended with inconveniences and imperfections in some respect or other?

“‘But the inexpediency,’ you say, ‘and excessiveness of such a tax!’ — Excessiveness depends upon the relative poverty and inability of those who are to pay it. But the fact is, that, when we raise about eight millions of money annually upon eight millions of persons, we expect that you would contribute one hundred thousand pounds to be raised on two millions; that is, we pay twenty shillings per head, and you one shilling! Blush, blush for shame,” &c., &c.

“Upon the whole, therefore, what is the cause of such an amazing outcry? Not the stamp duty itself; this is a mere sham and pretence. You are exasperated against the mother country on account of the revival of certain restrictions laid upon your trade. An

American will ever complain and smuggle, and smuggle and complain, till all restraints are removed. Any thing short of this is still a grievance, a badge of slavery, an usurpation on the natural rights and liberties of a free people, and I know not how many bad things besides.

"Your second grievance is, that you are sorely concerned that you cannot pay your British debts with an American sponge. An intolerable grievance this," &c., &c.

"Your third grievance is the sovereignty of Great Britain. For you want to be independent," &c., &c.

"In short, the sword is the only choice which you will permit us to make. I do not think that we have any cause to fear the event. A British army will hardly fly before an American mob. Yet I am not for having recourse to military operations.

"If we oblige you to pay your debts, and then have no further connection with you as a dependent state or colony, under the pressures and calamities that would ensue, your deluded countrymen will certainly open their eyes at last, will heartily wish and petition to be again united to the mother country," &c., &c.

Such were the reasonings of the Dean of Gloucester. I will now turn to a pamphlet of another description, written by Robinson, of which the expostulations and arguments were, I conclude, thought at the time as idle and unreasonable, by the generality of men, as the dean's were thought judicious and convincing. The author writes in May, 1774,\* just at the time when Lord North had carried his Boston Port Bill, &c., &c.

"The opposition and disturbances," says he, "on the one hand, and the violent laws, motions, and preparations on the other, all undoubtedly proceed from our having taxed the colonies without their consent. The right itself of this measure is in question, as well as the expediency of it.

"The inhabitants of the colonies have, by many and various means, acquired many and various sorts of property. They have a right to freedom in their governments, and to security in their persons and properties; none are warranted to deprive or dispossess them of these things. These principles are with us common and public; they were the principles of our ancestors, and are the principles which such men as Mr. Locke, Lord Molesworth, and Mr. Trenchard maintained with their pens, Mr. Hampden and Lord John Russell with their blood, and Mr. Algernon Sidney with both. They are likewise the real principles of our present actual government, the principles of the Revolution, and those on which are established the throne of the king and the settlement of the illustrious family now reigning over us.

\* The pamphlet referred to (entitled *Considerations on the Measures carrying on with Respect to the British Colonies in North America*) bears the date of April, 1774. See also p. 577, *post*. — N.



“Suppose one person to have in his pocket an hundred pounds, but another to have the right to take it from him and to put it into his own pocket, or to do with it what he pleases ; to whom does that money belong ?

“But in the case of the Americans, if it is said that the money raised on them is to be employed for their own benefit, in their civil service, or military defence, let me ask, then, Who are to determine whether any money is at all wanted for such purposes, — they who pay it, or they who take it ? They who take it. Who are to determine the quantity wanted, — how often it is wanted, — whether it is really laid out in the purposes pretended ? Still they who take it.

“Is this, then, on the one hand, a reasonable ground whereon to throw the mother country and her North American colonies into the most deadly feuds, and perhaps a direct war with one another ? Is it not, on the other hand, a proposition contrary to the principles whereon our forefathers defended, and under the sanction of which they have delivered down to us, the rights and properties which Englishmen now enjoy ?

“Our colonies are content that we should at our pleasure regulate their trade, but they deny that we shall tax them. Why cannot we content us with the line drawn by themselves ?

“But may not they in time extend their objections to this also ? All the whole of our colonies must, no doubt, one day, without force or violence, fall off from the parent state. But why should we shake the fruit unripe from the tree, because it will of course drop off when it shall in due season have become fit and ripe for that purpose ?

“There are, no doubt, in all governments, many most important points unsettled and undetermined. It is very much the part of every prudent ruler to avoid with the utmost care and solicitude all measures which may possibly bring any such critical circumstances into public debate and dispute.

“The present accursed question between us and our colonies, how long was it unknown or unthought of ! Who heard of it, from the first rise of those settlements, until a very few years ago ? But it is now already setting at work fleets and armies,” &c., &c.

“The claim of the Americans not to be taxed by us here in England rests on the special constitution of Great Britain, which requires that representation should go along with taxation. However, it has been said that the Americans are in our Parliament virtually represented. How that should be, when they are not really so, I shall leave to be explained by those who advance it. Arguments tending to demonstrate that the House of Commons does not, in its present state, represent us inhabiting here must be most strange ones to produce for the proving that it does represent our colonies lying beyond the Atlantic Ocean ; such points seem much more proper to raise scruples among ourselves at home than to satisfy and appease those of people abroad.

“But is there any medium? Must not we either rigorously enforce obedience from our colonies or at once generously declare them free and independent of all allegiance to the crown of Great Britain? To which I answer, If there is a medium between Great Britain and Ireland, why may there not be also between Great Britain and North America?

“But I may be told that the great do everywhere bear hard on the little, the strong on the weak; that our debts are very heavy, and our resources but too nearly at an end; that we have yet fleets and armies, and are determined to bend to our will our colonies of America, and to make them subservient to our wants and occasions. I answer, that you cannot force them. What expectation or probability can there be of sending from hence armies capable to conquer and subdue so great a force of men, defending and defended by such a continent? — But are they united among themselves? In the cause of not being taxed by us, it is well understood how much they are so. How can we expect otherwise? They are not unacquainted with the history of the mother country. — But what if one or more of the greatest powers in Europe should in a most critical and difficult moment declare war against us? Have France and Spain forgot the loss of Canada and Georgia? Were the cabinets of Versailles and Madrid united in council, what measure would they drive and push us upon before this very one which we are now of ourselves so fatally and so madly running upon?

“Instead of taxing, give a greater liberty and latitude of trade, both to Ireland and to America, to America including our West India islands. The riches and treasure of the more distant and dependent parts of our empire cannot fail to flow in upon us. We have nothing to do with little jealousies about this trade or that manufacture. Freedom of trade is our foundation. This must enrich the centre of empire, and cannot therefore likewise but increase its revenue.

“The stopping up the port of Boston, the new laws given to Massachusetts Bay, will, no doubt, be received in America as a declaration of war, and depend upon the same issue; it must be by force and conquest, if they submit. It is probably not a month or a year that will finally determine this affair. The authors of these measures, no doubt, expect that the removal of the custom-house and the suspension of the trade of Boston will bring these people on their knees. They may nevertheless find themselves much mistaken in the event.

“Some say that all the contradiction and opposition of America originates from home, and that it is only the faction of England which catches there. Nothing, perhaps, testifies a greater ignorance of the true state of that country than such a notion. Let any man place himself in America; imagine himself born, bred, resident, and



having all his concerns and fortune there. Let then any such man candidly and fairly ask himself in his own breast, what he should in that situation think of being taxed at Westminster."

Such is the general strain of this pamphlet, written in April, 1774; and in November of the same year an appendix was added. "Time and events," says the author, "have, in the short intervening space of seven months, but too plainly and too strongly confirmed my opinions." He then goes on to describe the fulfilment of his prophecies, to contrast the language that was held by others with the event, and to recommend that any propositions that might come from Congress might be made the ground of a future settlement. He observed, that "Charles the First granted ten times more at last than would have contented and have satisfied at first"; and he predicted that France and Spain would interfere against us, when we were, he said, "like a fish in a net, entangled beyond the power of getting free." These reasonings were addressed to the public in vain.

I will now give one representation more, in addition to Dean Tucker's, of arguments on the other side, such as were probably in the mouth of every man. The celebrated Dr. Johnson, a writer to whom the thoughtful and virtuous part of every community are so deeply indebted, one into whose pages no man ever looked for a single moment without seeing something either to strike or improve him, — Dr. Johnson condescended to write a pamphlet, as others had done, — *Taxation no Tyranny*, — and his production exemplifies, as I conceive, every position which I have laid down. He was not, indeed, ignorant of political economy, but on this occasion he disregarded all its principles; and having been originally a sort of Jacobite, and long habituated to lay down in a boisterous manner what are called Tory principles in church and state, the present was an occasion that could not fail to call forth all those particular opinions which so unhappily obscured and betrayed the great mind of this most respectable defender, on every other occasion, of the best interests of mankind.

The pamphlet was published in 1775. After some prefatory remarks, the Doctor arrives at the main point in dispute. "There are those who tell us that to tax the colonies is usurpation and oppression, an invasion of natural and legal rights, and a violation of those principles which support the constitution of English government."

With these positions of his opponents the Doctor struggles through many pages. He affirms, that "to him that considers the nature, the original, the progress, and the constitution of the colonies, it will not be doubted but the Parliament of England has a right to bind them by statutes, and to bind them in all cases whatsoever, and has therefore a natural and constitutional power of laying upon them any tax or impost, whether external or internal, for any end beneficial to the empire."

"There are some," says he, "who except the power of taxation from the general dominion of Parliament." "Of this exception," says he, "which, by a head not fully impregnated with politics, is not easily comprehended, it is alleged, as an unanswerable reason, that the colonies send no representatives to the House of Commons." To this his answer is, that the argument proves too much; that the right of making any other laws, civil or criminal, might be equally denied; that this last power was never disputed; and that the reception of any law draws after it the necessity of submitting also to taxation.

"That a free man is governed by himself," he continues, "or by laws to which he has consented, is a position of mighty sound; but every man that utters it feels it to be false. The business of the public must be done by delegation. The choice of delegates is made by a select number, and those who are not electors stand idle and helpless spectators. As all are born the subjects of some state or other, we may be said to have been all born consenting to some system of government. Other consent than this the condition of civil life does not allow; it is the delirious dream of republican fanaticism. He who goes voluntarily to America cannot complain of losing what he leaves in Europe. He is represented, as himself desired, in the general representation. The colonists have not, by abandoning their part in one legislature, obtained the power of constituting another.

"It is urged," says the Doctor, "that the Americans have not the same security, and that a British legislator may wanton with their property. Yet the Parliament has the same interest in attending to them as to any other part of the nation. We are as secure against intentional deprivations of government as human wisdom can make us, and upon this security the Americans may venture to repose.

"When they apply to our compassion, by telling us that they are to be carried from their own country, to be tried for certain offences, we are not so ready to pity them as to advise them not to offend. While they are innocent, they are safe.

"When they tell of laws made expressly for their punishment, we answer, that tumults and sedition were always punishable, and that the new law prescribes only the mode of execution.

"If frauds in the imposts of Boston are tried by commission without a jury, they are tried here in the same mode. If they are condemned unheard, it is because there is no need of a trial; the crime is manifest and notorious. All trial is the investigation of something doubtful. That the same vengeance involves the innocent and guilty is an evil to be lamented; but human caution cannot prevent it, nor human power always redress it. To bring misery on those who have not deserved it is part of the aggregated guilt of rebellion.

"When subordinate communities oppose the decrees of the general legislature with defiance thus audacious and malignity thus acrimonious



ous, nothing remains but to conquer or to yield, — to allow their claim of independence, or to reduce them by force to submission and allegiance. Yet there have risen up, in the face of the public, men who, by whatever corruptions or whatever infatuation, have undertaken to defend the Americans, endeavour to shelter them from resentment, and propose reconciliation without submission.

“The Dean of Gloucester has proposed, and seems to propose it seriously, that we should at once release our claims, declare them masters of themselves, and whistle them down the wind. It is, however, a little hard, that, having so lately fought and conquered for their safety, we should govern them no longer. One wild proposal is best answered by another. Let us restore to the French what we have taken from them. We shall see our colonists at our feet, when they have an enemy so near them.

“It seems to be determined by the legislature that force shall be tried. I cannot forbear to wish that this commotion may end without bloodshed, and that the rebels may be subdued by terror rather than by violence; and therefore recommend such a force as may take away, not only the power, but the hope, of resistance. If their obstinacy continues without actual hostilities, it may perhaps be mollified by turning out the soldiers to free quarters, forbidding any personal cruelty or hurt. It has been proposed that the slaves should be set free, — an act which surely the lovers of liberty cannot but commend. If they are furnished with fire-arms for defence, and utensils for husbandry, and settled in some simple form of government within the country, they may be more grateful and honest than their masters. Since the Americans have made it necessary to subdue them, may they be subdued with the least injury possible to their persons and their possessions.

“We are told that the subjection of Americans may tend to the diminution of our own liberties, — an event which none but very perspicacious politicians are able to foresee. If slavery be thus fatally contagious, how is it that we hear the loudest yelps for liberty among the drivers of negroes?”

These few extracts from this celebrated pamphlet may give you some idea of the comprehensiveness of the Doctor's mind on such a subject as this, — of his notions of government in general, and more especially of the constitution of England, — and, when authority was to be enforced, of his humanity and of his wit. He seems ready to suppose that people were to be mollified by having soldiers living at free quarters among them, and to be brought to reason by seeing slaves let loose upon them! Yet who can doubt that Johnson was a man of vigorous understanding, — that he was a friend to his country, — that he was a well-wisher to the best interests of the human race, — that he was a man of humanity and benevolence? Is not he the great moralist of our country, — he who has rivalled his own

beautiful praise of Addison, — “has taught virtue not to be ashamed, and even turned many to righteousness” \*? Yet such is his pamphlet; so coarse in sentiment, so unkind in spirit, so defective in wisdom.

To those who are capable of meditating upon the nature of human feelings and human faculties, I know of no greater lesson than this production affords, of the importance of our political notions, — of the necessity there is that they should be always made to refer to, at least that they should never lose sight of, the *popular* principles of the English constitution, — should be well laid down and bottomed, not only in respect for those who govern, but in tenderness for those who are to be governed, — in a deep sense of that equal justice which is to be administered to all human beings, whether near us or at a distance, — of that patience and respect with which all those are to be listened to, of whatever climate or condition, who speak the language of freedom, or raise the voice of complaint.

Compare with Dr. Johnson his friend Mr. Burke; note the language of each on the same subject, considering at the same time the very eminent qualities that belonged to both, — vigor being found in the mind of the one as of the other, comprehensiveness, activity, liveliness, rapidity, the powers of imagination, and all the copiousness of eloquence; no ignorance in Mr. Burke, any more than in Dr. Johnson, of the necessity of obedience, of order, and of respect for rank and authority; but the one properly impressed at the same time by whatever means, which the other was not, with a sense of the paramount value of all those great fundamental principles which form the protection of the liberties of England.

What were, then, the views and reasonings of Mr. Burke? You will see them in the works that are published, though of many of his most brilliant speeches in the House of Commons no idea can now be formed. Those that are published must be your study; and they cannot be too much your study, if you mean either to understand, or to maintain against its various enemies, open and concealed, designing and mistaken, the singular constitution of this fortunate island. As far as the subject of America is concerned, you should meditate well the *last third* of his pamphlet entitled “Observations on a Late Publication, intituled, The Present State of the Nation”; then, I think, his Letter to the Sheriffs of Bristol; lastly, his two celebrated speeches, and particularly the documents on the Proposed Secession, the Address to the King, &c., now first regularly published in the volumes that have lately appeared of his works.

\* “He has restored virtue to its dignity, and taught innocence not to be ashamed. This is an elevation of literary character, above all Greek, above all Roman fame. No greater felicity can genius attain than that of having purified intellectual pleasure, separated mirth from indecency, and wit from licentiousness; of having taught a succession of writers to bring elegance and gaiety to the aid of goodness; and, if I may use expressions yet more awful, of having *turned many to righteousness*.” *Lives of the Poets*, Vol. ii. p. 379 (London, 1783). — N.



But it is to his two speeches that you will naturally turn; they were very justly admired at the time, and they are fitted for ever to remain the proper monuments of the wisdom as well as eloquence of this extraordinary man. So early as April, 1774, Mr. Burke made every effort which could be made by a discerning patriot and an interesting orator, to attract the attention of the House to the history of the American dispute, and to clear away, if possible, that most unfortunate tax on tea which Lord North had left standing, practically to indicate the right of the British Parliament, and which therefore served only to keep the dispute still alive, and the Americans in a state of irritation; for it was the practical exercise of the right, and the consequences that might ensue, which were the objects of alarm, not the quantity of the tax.

Mr. Burke describes the manner in which, at the peace, it was thought necessary to keep up no less than twenty new regiments, and the hopes that were held out to the country gentlemen by Charles Townshend, of a revenue to be raised from America. "Here began," says he, "to dawn the first glimmerings of this new colony system. It appeared more distinctly afterwards. . . . With the best intentions in the world, Mr. George Grenville first brought this fatal scheme into form, and established it by act of Parliament. . . . He was bred to the law, which is, in my opinion, one of the first and noblest of human sciences, — a science which does more to quicken and invigorate the understanding than all the other kinds of learning put together; but it is not apt, except in persons very happily born, to open and to liberalize the mind exactly in the same proportion. Passing from that study, he did not go very largely into the world, but plunged into business, — I mean into the business of office." "Men," he adds, "too much conversant in office are rarely minds of remarkable enlargement." — This observation of Mr. Burke, as well as the former, is most just; and if men of rank and fortune send their sons into public offices, as they seem disposed to do, to become, as it were, apprentices to their trade, adieu to the race of statesmen; and our great empire will have to be governed, not by those who are capable of rule, but by those who ought rather to be their clerks and law agents.

I must be indulged here with one moment of digression. Men who thus begin with the routine of office, and who thus early imbibe all the notions of office, never afterwards get beyond them. They become familiarized with corruption, accustomed to petty tricks and paltry expedients. Their understandings are narrowed; their feelings blunted; their minds rendered coarse and vulgar; the natural sense of patriotism, and benevolence, and honor, is weakened and debased; they mistake their craft for sagacity, their acquaintance with detail for more profound wisdom; and it is scarcely too much to say, that they become, through the remainder of their public life, the secret or avowed friends of servility, the deriders of all public spirit,

the enemies of all improvement, and, if any crisis of human affairs occurs, the most fatal counsellors, with or without their intention, that their king or their country can listen to. Of all spectacles, one of the most melancholy is to see the representative of a noble or powerful family thrown early into an office, to be swaddled and bound up by the clerks that preside there, and made to assimilate himself in his opinions and feelings to those whom he ought, from the privileges and advantages of his birth and education, to enlighten and command.

But to return. Mr. Burke then pursues the history of the American dispute; Mr. Grenville's Stamp Act; the repeal of it by the Whig administration of Lord Rockingham; the characters of Lord Chatham and Charles Townshend. These passages in his speech are well known, and I need not further allude to them.

"The distinction," he goes on to say, "of internal and external duties was originally moved by the Americans themselves; and I think," says he, "they will acquiesce in it, if they are not pushed with too much logic and too little sense in all the consequences. . . . Recover your old ground, and your old tranquillity. Try it; I am persuaded the Americans will compromise with you. . . ."

"Again, and again, revert to your old principles; seek peace and ensue it; leave America, if she has taxable matter in her, to tax herself. I am not here going into the distinctions of rights, nor attempting to mark their boundaries. I do not enter into these metaphysical distinctions; I hate the very sound of them. Leave the Americans as they anciently stood, and these distinctions, born of our unhappy contest, will die along with it. They and we, and their and our ancestors, have been happy under that system. Let the memory of all actions, in contradiction to that good old mode, on both sides, be extinguished for ever. Be content to bind America by laws of trade; you have always done it. Let this be your reason for binding their trade. Do not burden them by taxes; you were not used to do so from the beginning. Let this be your reason for not taxing. *These* are the arguments of states and kingdoms; leave the rest to the schools, for there only they may be discussed with safety.

"But if, intemperately, unwisely, fatally, you sophisticate and poison the very source of government, by urging subtle deductions, and consequences odious to those you govern, from the unlimited and illimitable nature of supreme sovereignty, you will teach them by these means to call that sovereignty itself in question. When you drive him hard, the boar will surely turn upon the hunters. If that sovereignty and their freedom cannot be reconciled, which will they take? They will cast your sovereignty in your face. No body will be argued into slavery. Sir, let the gentlemen on the other side call forth all their ability; let the best of them get up and tell me what one character of liberty the Americans have, and what one brand of



slavery they are free from, if they are bound in their property and industry by all the restraints you can imagine on commerce, and at the same time are made pack-horses of every tax you choose to impose, without the least share in granting them. When they bear the burdens of unlimited monopoly, will you bring them to bear the burdens of unlimited revenue too? The Englishman in America will feel that this is slavery; that it is *legal* slavery will be no compensation either to his feelings or his understanding.

"A noble lord [Lord Carmarthen], who spoke some time ago, is full of the fire of ingenuous youth; and when he has modelled the ideas of a lively imagination by further experience, he will be an ornament to his country in either house. He has said, that the Americans are our children, and how can they revolt against their parent? He says, that, if they are not free in their present state, England is not free, because Manchester and other considerable places are not represented. So, then, because some towns in England are not represented, America is to have no representative at all. They are 'our children'; but when children ask for bread, we are not to give a stone. Is it because the natural resistance of things, and the various mutations of time, hinders our government, or any scheme of government, from being any more than a sort of approximation to the right, is it therefore that the colonies are to recede from it infinitely? . . . . Are we to give them our weakness for their strength; our opprobrium for their glory; and the slough of slavery, which we are not able to work off, to serve them for their freedom? If this be the case, ask yourselves this question, — Will they be content in such a state of slavery? If not, look to the consequences. Reflect how you are to govern a people who think they ought to be free, and think they are not. Your scheme yields no revenue; it yields nothing but discontent, disorder, disobedience; and such is the state of America, that, after wading up to your eyes in blood, you could only end just where you begun; that is, to tax where no revenue is to be found; to — my voice fails me; my inclination, indeed, carries me no further, — all is confusion beyond it."

But observations like these were vain. The majority against him was very great; the coercive system was adopted; and a year afterwards, in March, 1775, Mr. Burke made another, and even more memorable, effort in the cause of conciliation. You will see it in his Works; you will guess the sort of matter, but you cannot, without perusal and meditation of it, imagine to yourselves the beauty, the propriety, the profound wisdom of the sentiments and opinions it contains.

"I confess," says he, "my opinion is much more in favor of prudent management than of force, — considering force, not as an odious, but a feeble, instrument for preserving a people so numerous, so active, so growing, so spirited as this, in a profitable and subordinate

connection with us. Force is in its effects but temporary. It is uncertain. You impair the object by your very endeavours to preserve it. The thing you fought for is not the thing which you recover. I do not choose to consume the strength of America along with our own; nor to be caught by a foreign enemy at the end of this exhausting conflict, and still less in the midst of it. Let me add, that I do not choose wholly to break the American spirit, because it is the spirit that has made the country. Consider, too, the temper and character of the Americans. A love of freedom is the predominating feature. The people of the colonies are descendants of Englishmen. They are, therefore, not only devoted to liberty, but to liberty according to English ideas, and on English principles. Now the great contests for freedom in this country were, from the earliest times, chiefly upon the question of taxing. The colonies draw from you, as with their life-blood, these ideas and principles. Their love of liberty, as with you, fixed and attached on this specific point of taxing."

Mr. Burke proceeds further to the consideration of the government, the religion, the education of the Americans, drawing from each his general conclusion that they were not a people that could be coerced. But again, says he, "Three thousand miles of ocean lie between you and them; no contrivance can prevent the effect of this distance in weakening government. Seas roll and months pass between the order and the execution, and the want of a speedy explanation of a single point is enough to defeat an whole system. Who are you that should fret and rage, and bite the chains of nature? Nothing worse happens to you than does to all nations who have extensive empire. From all these causes a fierce spirit of liberty has grown up. The question is, not whether their spirit deserves praise or blame; — what, in the name of God, shall we do with it? You have before you the object, such as it is, with all its glories, with all its imperfections on its head. We are strongly urged to determine something concerning it. I am much against any further experiments. In effect, we suffer as much at home as we do abroad; for, in order to prove that the Americans have no right to their liberties, we are every day endeavouring to subvert the maxims which preserve the whole spirit of our own. We never seem to gain a paltry advantage over them in debate, without attacking some of those principles or deriding some of those feelings for which our ancestors have shed their blood."

I am quoting, you see, Mr. Burke; I am referring to him at great length. Among other reasons that may occur to you why I do so, there is one more particularly my own, which I must mention to you. It is this: you will remember, that, on endeavouring to account for the American war, I brought forward to you, as a cause, the prevalence of a certain vulgarity of sentiment in politics. I must own, I consider this as a most important fault. I am certainly very anxious



upon this point. There are few upon which, as a lecturer, I can be more anxious; and therefore, in the course of the consideration of this American subject, I had marked down a long list of instances in the speeches and conduct of our ministers, of our country gentlemen, and finally of the public, with an intention of reading them to you, thinking, that, if I exhibited them with comments, you might be the better protected from such mistakes, — such vulgar mistakes, as I presume to call them, — yourselves. But the more I read and reflected upon the two speeches and the letter of Mr. Burke, the more I became persuaded that such a detailed exhibition on my part would be unnecessary; for, if you read and meditate, and get thoroughly imbued with the spirit of wisdom which breathes through these performances, you will want neither quickness of sagacity nor accuracy of sentiment to observe and feel, as you read the history for yourselves, those very instances of vulgar politics to which I had alluded, and which, indeed, I find I could not well state to you one by one with proper comments, without a much greater expenditure of your time, while in this place, than I can afford, if I may so speak, to consume on this or any other single and more particular point. On this account, then, have I dwelt so long on the speeches of Mr. Burke; and it is on this account that I must proceed with some further references and quotations, though I will not continue them much longer.

After discussing different modes of conduct to America, “No way,” said he, “is open, but to comply with the American spirit, as necessary, or, if you please, to submit to it as a necessary evil. Sir, I think you must perceive that I am resolved, this day, to have nothing at all to do with the question of the right of taxation. It is not what a lawyer tells me I *may* do, but what humanity, reason, and justice tell me I *ought* to do.

“But the colonies will go further. — Alas! alas! what will quiet these panic fears which we entertain of the hostile effect of a conciliatory conduct? Is it a certain maxim, that, the fewer causes of dissatisfaction are left by government, the more the subject will be inclined to resist and rebel? It is a very great mistake to imagine that mankind follow up practically any speculative principle, either of government or of freedom, as far as it will go in argument and logical illation.

“A revenue from America transmitted hither! Do not delude yourselves; you never can receive it. For all service, whether of revenue, trade, or empire, my trust is in the interest which America has in the British constitution. My hold of the colonies is in the close affection which grows from common names, from kindred blood, from similar privileges, and equal protection. These are ties which, though light as air, are as strong as links of iron. Let the colonies always keep the idea of their civil rights associated with your government; they will cling and grapple to you, and no force under heaven

will be of power to tear them from their allegiance. But let it be once understood that your government may be one thing, and their privileges another, — that these two things may exist without any mutual relation, — the cement is gone, the cohesion is loosened, and every thing hastens to decay and dissolution.

“As long as you have the wisdom to keep the sovereign authority of this country as the sanctuary of liberty, the sacred temple consecrated to our common faith, wherever the chosen race and sons of England worship freedom, they will turn their faces towards you. The more they multiply, the more friends you will have; the more ardently they love liberty, the more perfect will be their obedience. Slavery they can have anywhere. It is a weed that grows in every soil. They may have it from Spain, they may have it from Prussia; but until you become lost to all feeling of your true interest and your natural dignity, freedom they can have from none but you. This is the commodity of price, of which you have the monopoly. This is the true act of navigation, which binds to you the commerce of the colonies, and through them secures to you the wealth of the world. Deny them this participation of freedom, and you break that sole bond which originally made, and must still preserve, the unity of the empire.

“Do not entertain so weak an imagination, as that your registers and your bonds, your affidavits and your sufferances, your cockets and your clearances, are what form the great securities of your commerce. Do not dream that your letters of office, and your instructions, and your suspending clauses, are the things that hold together the great contexture of this mysterious whole. These things do not make your government. Dead instruments, passive tools, as they are, it is the spirit of the English communion that gives all their life and efficacy to them. It is the spirit of the English constitution, which, infused through the mighty mass, pervades, feeds, unites, invigorates, vivifies every part of the empire, even down to the minutest member. Is it not the same virtue which does every thing for us here in England? Do you imagine, then, that it is the Land-Tax Act which raises your revenue? that it is the annual vote in the Committee of Supply which gives you your army? or that it is the Mutiny Bill which inspires it with bravery and discipline? No, surely no! It is the love of the people; it is their attachment to their government, from the sense of the deep stake they have in such a glorious institution, which gives you your army and your navy, and infuses into both that liberal obedience without which your army would be a base rabble, and your navy nothing but rotten timber.

“All this, I know well enough, will sound wild and chimerical to the profane herd of those vulgar and mechanical politicians who have no place among us; a sort of people who think that nothing exists but what is gross and material; and who, therefore, far from being quali



fied to be directors of the great movement of empire, are not fit to turn a wheel in the machine. But to men truly initiated and rightly taught, these ruling and master principles, which, in the opinion of such men as I have mentioned, have no substantial existence, are in truth every thing, and all in all.

“Magnanimity in politics is not seldom the truest wisdom, and a great empire and little minds go ill together. If we are conscious of our situation, and glow with zeal to fill our place as becomes our station and ourselves, we ought to auspicate all our public proceedings on America with the old warning of the Church, *Sursum corda!* We ought to elevate our minds to the greatness of that trust to which the order of Providence has called us. By adverting to the dignity of this high calling, our ancestors have turned a savage wilderness into a glorious empire, and have made the most extensive and the only honorable conquests; not by destroying, but by promoting, the wealth, the number, the happiness of the human race. Let us get an American revenue as we have got an American empire. English privileges have made it all that it is; English privileges alone will make it all it can be.”

Mr. Burke moved his resolution, but the previous question was carried against him, — two hundred and seventy to seventy-eight. Well, indeed, might Mr. Burke observe, that a great empire and little minds go but ill together, and that the march of the human mind is slow.

I turn with difficulty from the pages of Mr. Burke. I proceed not to his Letter addressed to the Sheriffs of Bristol; I make no more quotations; I have made, it may be thought, already too many and too long; but if I can but thus secure your reading these compositions, I could not possibly have occupied your time better, and I have not then made quotations either too many or too long. You are men of education, and should be distinguished hereafter by the elevation of your sentiments and the comprehensiveness of your views, — that is, not a little by the magnanimity, I had almost said by the considerate good-temper, of your feelings and reasonings on political subjects; and be assured that your own country, like every other country, will fare well or fare ill, as such refinement of mind and elevated kindness of temperament does or does not prevail among its rulers. Never was such an absence of it as appeared in this nation during the American war; never was such a display of it as in the speeches of Mr. Burke to which I have referred. Here, then, is your school. It is natural for me to quote at great length from works which, if successful in producing upon your minds their proper effects, will accomplish for me, at once, many of the best purposes which I ought to labor most anxiously to attain; for among such purposes the noblest and the first must be, to enlarge your understandings, and to harmonize your feelings to the rights of others, and to the claims of mercy

and justice, whatever be the occasion on which they are urged, or the clime or the people whence they arise.

Mine, however, is on this occasion but a ministerial office : it is to point out to you those immortal productions, and no more : it is to show you the temple, and to stand at the portal, and to persuade you not to pass lightly by and disregard it, but to enter in and survey its columns and approach its shrine ; to pause and to reflect, and to ponder all these things in your heart, that you may hereafter walk forth to the exercise of your duties, — some of you, the highest duties which human beings can have to perform, — the duties of legislation ; that you may come abroad into the world, animated with benevolence, and soothed into a spirit of forbearance and of patience, when exposed to the resistance which, if you are to labor for the good of others, you must encounter both in friends and foes ; better men and wiser men, and purged from the mean and vindictive passions of our nature. For the temple to which I would now direct your steps is far unlike the sacred groves or venerated edifices of ignorance and superstition ; —

“ Unbribed, unbloody, stands the blameless priest.”

It is a temple of peace, and it is a temple of wisdom. There is no awe, and no terror, and no idol, before whose appalling fires the human victim is to be sacrificed. Scenes and images of this terrific nature should rather be associated with those men who spoke of unconditional submission, of insulted supremacy, and of necessary punishment ; who, like the great minister of the vengeance of Spain, the ferocious Duke of Alva, talked of gangrenes that were to be cured by fire and by sword.

Such were not the sounds, such was not the wisdom, which this patriot of the British senate breathed during the whole of this memorable period. Posterity will do him that justice which but too few of those whom he addressed were capable of rendering him ; and however those who come after us may, or may not, differ in their opinion of the effusions of his mind on later occasions, at the opening and during the progress of the French Revolution, when his genius may be supposed by some to have been sublimed almost into frenzy by the scenes that in visible presence passed before him, and still more by those that came thronging and terrible upon him in the visions of his listening expectation, — however men may, or may not, contest his claim to the character of a *political* prophet (though all must surely consider him as the great *moral* prophet of Europe, at the first appearance of this tremendous event), — however these things may be, no intelligent statesman, no meditating philosopher on the affairs of men, will deny to him the praise of clearly discerning, and luminously stating, at the opening of the American Revolution at least, all the human passions that were at work on the other side of the Atlantic,



and of making every effort which eloquence and wisdom were competent to make to medicine into peace the unhappy passions which were no less in full operation on *this* side of the Atlantic. And though these efforts were unavailing, though a greater Power had decreed that a new empire was now to issue from the far retired recesses of undisturbed forests and the wide-spreading tracts of uncultivated nature, the merit of the statesman must be ever the same; the statesman who, amid the delusions of the hour, could take the same view of the justice and policy of the case before him which will be taken by posterity; who, amid the menaces of violence and military coercion which animated the speeches of those around him, could, in the spirit of the angelic choir, speak the words of peace on earth and good-will towards men; and, amid the clamors of those who called aloud for unconditional submission and unconditional taxation, could maintain, with all that splendor of wisdom and of eloquence to which I have directed your admiration, the doctrines of mild government, and the free principles of the constitution of England.

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## LECTURE XXXIII.

### AMERICAN WAR.

You will have observed, from the extracts I have produced, that, in the course of the debates in Parliament, many members appear to have denounced to the ministers beforehand the folly of their expectations, and the evil consequences by which their measures would be attended. Such instances of peculiar wisdom in statesmen and in parties have at other times occurred, and they ought always to be considered as the proper subjects of meditation to those who are ambitious to be hereafter wise and virtuous legislators or intelligent patriots, themselves. It should be asked, how this superior wisdom was obtained, and why it was not successful.

It is sometimes said, on these occasions, by those who have nothing else to say, that predictions of this kind are made, not from a spirit of wisdom, but from a spirit of opposition; that the ministers having taken their course in one direction, their opponents necessarily proceed in the other; that it is the very study and occupation of those who are on one side of the House to contradict the assertions and vilify the measures of those who are on the other; and that all denunciations of ruin and defeat are words of course, — the mere

terms of declamation and abuse, played off by those who are without against the garrison within, of a fort which they are endeavouring to storm.

It must be observed, therefore, in a few words, that the ministers have the *first* choice of their measures, and if they adopt those which lead to disappointment and defeat, *they* at least are wrong, and the proper objects of public censure, whatever we may say of their opponents; but with respect to these last, that it by no means follows, if the ministers have gone to the left, that their opponents shall necessarily turn to the right; because, whatever they do, they do, like the ministers themselves, at the hazard of their own characters, — at the risk of their credit with wise and good men. They who are out of office can come into office only by rising in the estimation of their sovereign and the public, very often of the public only; and one of the most obvious ways of rising in this estimation is by showing superior sagacity in the concerns of the empire. It must also be observed, that what public men, whether in or out of office, must avoid, is the making of predictions. This is what is called, in their own language, “committing themselves,” and is never done without the greatest caution and necessity; and therefore, whenever public men choose to put themselves at issue with the ministers, and hazard predictions, they become from that moment entitled to the praise of superior wisdom or not, just as their expectations are or are not verified by the event. Indeed, upon any other supposition, the situation of our statesmen would be somewhat ludicrous, and any display of political wisdom would be impossible, if those who advise measures are to have credit when they succeed, and those who predict the folly of such measures are to have no credit when they fail.

The only point on the subject that can now remain seems to be this, — whether the prediction has been occasioned, not by superior philosophy or wisdom, but by some particular whim or passion or prejudice in the speaker’s mind. This is a mere question of fact, and before such an explanation can be received, the case must be made out. This supposition, however, is out of the question, when they who have made predictions are not a few, but many, — and not rash or young men, but men of information, character, and experience. It will always be found that those who not only have predicted, but have predicted truly, have drawn their principles from deeper sources in human nature than their opponents have, have taken their views from more commanding heights, and have been better able to discern the philosophy of the case, and have probably not acquiesced in the popular or first notions of it, — that is, in a word, have shown themselves men of greater capacity for the management of the affairs of mankind.

In the case, indeed, before us, these predictions were uttered, not only in the speeches of different statesmen, but in the pamphlets of



different writers ; and to the latter such objections as we have alluded to are even less reasonable than when applied to speakers in Parliament.

I have now stated to you what I conceive to have been the causes that so unfortunately operated on this side of the Atlantic to produce the civil war with America. I have endeavoured to illustrate my positions by a reference, first, to the debates of Parliament, and, secondly, to the most noted pamphlets that appeared at the time, and more particularly to the speeches, that were afterwards published as pamphlets, by Mr. Burke. I shall now endeavour to illustrate the same positions by a reference to one of the writers of America, as well as one of our own ; that is, I shall endeavour to make a comparison of the different views that were taken of the same measures and events by the Americans and ourselves, — seeking for one in the pages of Dr. Ramsay, and for the other in those of the Annual Register ; and I do this to-day, because I wish you to do it for yourselves hereafter. My present lecture I intend to be a specimen of what I mean when I advise you, as I now do, to note well what was thought by the two opposite parties in this dispute, — that is, not only by ourselves, but by the Americans. You know the great precept of Christianity, the great maxim of morality, “Do unto others as you would they should do unto you.” The more you accustom yourselves to this discipline of your feelings, the better. Try it in the subject now before you ; you will be the more able and the more willing to do it hereafter on every public occasion that can occur ; that is, you will not only be better men in the relations of private life, but, on the larger scale, you will be more rational advisers to your sovereign, or more useful members of the legislature, or more intelligent individuals, when you are to form your estimates, from time to time, as you ought to do, of the measures of those who administer the government of your country.

No doubt, all comparisons of this kind, of one book and one set of opinions with another, is a process somewhat tedious and repulsive ; but you are, I hope, not now to learn the difference between reading and study, — between what I may call passive reading and active reading, — between sitting still to receive from a book the ideas and impressions it may give you, and stopping to reflect upon its opinions, occasionally examine its references, and compare and contrast its estimates and conclusions with those of other writers. It is a process of this last kind that can alone deserve the respectable name of study ; but, like every other process from which the human character is to acquire the attribute of *merit*, it implies something to be achieved and to be endured, — some toil, some patience, some virtue, some valuable quality of the mind or temper to be exercised.

It is, indeed, the great business of this place to teach men the exercise of their understanding, and to initiate them in the duties and

sacrifices by which all intellectual as well as moral improvement must be attained. Those young men have taken a very unworthy and mistaken view of our system, who suppose that they are taught the sciences, for instance, only for the immediate and appropriate value of the knowledge they convey, — that nothing more is meant or accomplished. Let any man endeavour properly to pass through our examinations, no matter what be the subject, or whether he be successful or not, he will then have been taught to comprehend what it is to know a subject, and what it is only to be acquainted with it and only to suppose he knows it; and he will feel the benefit of his labors, or of his sufferings, if you please, if he should ever have afterwards to engage in a profession, to take a part in our houses of legislature, to propose a measure on the most ordinary occasion at a town or county meeting, or even to a committee of the subscribers to a public charity.

But I am insensibly travelling out of my more proper province. The whole business and purport of these lectures, as I have from the first announced, is to assist you in reading history for yourselves, — to enable you, as far as I am competent, to turn the materials before you to the best advantage, to some purpose of your present and future improvement. Occasionally, therefore, I must propose to you tasks of some labor and exertion. I do so now; but I have reduced it, as I think, to the smallest compass. The books I have selected are very concisely written, and I will now give you a slight specimen of what they contain, and of what I propose to you to do hereafter for yourselves.

You have already seen what were the views of men on this side of the Atlantic; observe now what was thought on the other. I shall proceed, as I have already intimated, to give you some idea of the account furnished by Ramsay; I shall afterwards direct your attention to the Annual Register.

The work of Ramsay is short, and it is the American account. The author was a member of Congress, and had access to all the official papers of the United States. He quotes not his authorities, though he proposes hereafter to do so, if it should then be necessary. The author does not criticize with proper severity the conduct of Congress; and he is disposed to palliate the defeats of the Americans in the field, — not considering that the more difficult it was to bring militia and raw troops to face the regular armies of England, the greater was the merit of the generals and legislators who succeeded in procuring victory and independence for their country. But with these exceptions, the author appears to give a candid and intelligent account of the revolution he witnessed; and it is impossible for an English student to judge of these transactions without reading this work or Marshall's Life of Washington.

In this work, as in others, I would wish you more particularly to note the earlier stages of this dispute. You will find the first chap-



ter, on the settlement of the English colonies, reasonable and good. Proper observations are made on the charters, the nature of the enterprise, and the rights that result from it. The general notion was, according to Ramsay, (though I abridge his sentences for the sake of brevity, I use his words, and shall continue to do so for some time,) that the settlers were to have the rights of English subjects, as if they had remained at home; but no such question of right as was afterwards agitated in the colonies and the mother country was ever thought of at the time. On the whole, the prerogatives of royalty were but feebly impressed on the colonial forms of government. In some provinces, the inhabitants chose their governors, and all other public officers; the legislatures were under little or no control: in others, the crown delegated most of its powers to particular persons, who were also invested with the property of the soil: and in those most dependent on the king, his power over the provincial assemblies seemed not greater than over the House of Commons in England; and from the acquiescence of the parent state, the spirit of our constitution, and the common practice of every day's experience, the colonists grew up in a belief that their local assemblies stood in the same relation to them as the houses of Parliament to the mother country.

The good effects of the free system of colonization were visible in their rapid progress. The colonies obtained their charters, and the greatest number of their settlers, between 1603 and 1688;\* and the settlers were in general devoted to liberty. The principles of freedom, and even of democratic freedom, were ingrafted and incorporated for ever into their minds from the following circumstances: — their extraction, their religion, the books they read, their colonial governments, their distance from the mother country, the general equality of rank, their freehold and independent property, their simple modes of life, the little patronage held by the crown.

Now these are the facts as stated by Ramsay, — sufficiently obvious, and facts that could not have been denied at the time; facts that might have been known on this side of the Atlantic, and must have been known to those of our public men who condescended to think at all upon the subject. And what was the preparation, I would ask, that these formed for the project of our English ministers and lawyers to exercise over the colonies the right of taxation?

The first symptom of the American dispute appeared so early as 1754: it is alluded to by Governor Pownall in one of his speeches in Parliament; it is mentioned by Ramsay. When the French were

\* That is, between the accession of James I., under whose auspices the earliest successful settlements were made, and the period of the English Revolution. The oldest of the Thirteen Colonies, Virginia, was founded in 1607, under a charter granted the previous year; and the last during that century, Pennsylvania, in 1682: the charter of the youngest, Georgia, dates from a period fifty years later. See Ramsay, *Hist. Amer. Rev.*, Ch. i.; also, *Holmes's Annals of America*. — N.

expected soon to attack America, the governors and principal members of the provincial assemblies met at Albany, in 1754, and proposed that a grand general council should be formed of the members of these assemblies,\* and that they, with the governor appointed by the crown, should make general laws, and raise money from *all* the colonies for their common defence. The British ministry proposed, on the contrary, that the governors of all the colonies, with one or two members of their councils, should concert and execute all necessary measures, but draw upon the British treasury, and then be reimbursed by a tax laid on the colonies by act of Parliament, — that is, by act of our British Parliament.

This plan was not relished by the colonists, any more than the former had been by the ministry: in the one, you will observe, the right of taxation was exercised by America, — in the other, by England. But the Pelhams, being prudent ministers, did not urge the difference into a regular dispute. Dr. Franklin, it seems, at the time, gave his opinion on the proposition of the British minister; and had the sagacity to anticipate the substance of a controversy which, in ten years afterwards, began to employ, and for twenty years did employ, the tongues, the pens, and the swords of the two countries. You will find the whole account in the third volume of his Works.

In the second chapter of Ramsay, you will find the origin of the dispute in the year 1764 described, and then its progress through the vexatious restrictions that had been at different times enacted, down to the fatal Stamp Act of 1764 and 1765. Proper observations are made on the right of taxation, and on the exercise of it.

The effect of the Stamp Act in America is then detailed with very proper minuteness: the uneasiness, the irritation, the inflammation, the fury, the insanity, that at length appeared. The particulars mentioned are instructive, and they form part of that appropriate and local information which the work contains, and which is so valuable. It is observed that the speeches of Mr. Pitt inspired the Americans with additional confidence in the rectitude of their cause; but the good effect of the repeal of the Stamp Act, by the Rockingham administration, is most distinctly stated. “It was no sooner known in America, than the colonists rescinded their resolutions, and recommenced their mercantile intercourse with the mother country: their public and private rejoicings knew no bounds.” Ramsay also states that “the bulk of the Americans considered the Declaratory Act,” passed at the same time, “as a salvo for the honor of Parliament, and flattered themselves it would remain a dead letter: unwilling to con-

\* Professor Smyth abridges rather loosely in this place. Ramsay's language is, — “That a grand council should be formed of *members to be chosen by the provincial assemblies*, which council, together with a governor to be appointed by the crown, should,” &c. Hist. Amer. Rev., Vol. i. p. 37. The governor, as he is here called, is styled in the Plan of Union itself, *President-General*. For the paper entire, see Sparks's Franklin, Vol. iii. pp. 36–55. — N.



tend about paper claims of ideal supremacy, they returned to their habits of good-humor with the parent state." Dr. Ramsay then proceeds to state, perhaps even to exaggerate, the "high-sounding pretensions," as he calls them, which were the result of this species of victory over the mother country. It is impossible, no doubt, that a mistake in legislation should ever be entirely harmless; but he at length observes, that these high-sounding pretensions would have spent themselves in words, had not the idea of taxing America been soon after revived by Charles Townshend. We have now again appropriate information, and a short detail of the disturbances that took place.

On the whole, the minds of the Americans might have been pacified, even after this very injudicious revival of the dispute; but certainly not without an entire disavowal by the mother country of a claim to taxation. The ministers of England, in the mean time, seem to have been little aware of, or little disposed to attend to, the sentiments of the people of America. Upon a supposition that it was thought any object to retain America, nothing could be more unworthy of statesmen than the declarations of themselves and their friends, during all the earlier years of the contest.

A third chapter describes the effect produced by the tea tax, and the importation of the article, as well as by the three famous acts, the Boston Port Bill, the bill for altering the constitution of Massachusetts, and for removing, if necessary, the trial of capital offenders to Great Britain. These last three laws were considered as forming a complete system of tyranny, from which there was scarcely a chance to escape. "By the first," said the Americans, "the property of unoffending thousands is arbitrarily taken away for the act of a few individuals; by the second, our chartered liberties are annihilated; and by the third, our lives may be destroyed with impunity. Property, liberty, and life are all sacrificed on the altar of ministerial vengeance."

The three acts became the cement of the union of all the States of America against Great Britain. These acts were, in the mean time, popular in England; and this is the lesson of instruction which the history offers you: that nations, like individuals, never condescend to stop and examine how far the arguments and feelings of their opponents may be reasonable and just; and hence it follows, that men of rank and influence, in any community, can never be better employed than in prevailing on their countrymen to pause and reflect, — to remember that in every quarrel there must necessarily be two sides, and that it would be a marvellous circumstance indeed, if the one side — that is, themselves — were exclusively in the right.

The fourth and fifth chapters, like the second and third, contain appropriate information. America, it seems, was agreed on the general question; but the difficulty was, for the inhabitants of Massa-

chusetts, particularly of Boston, to persuade the rest of the continent to make a common cause with them. "The other provinces," says Ramsay, "were but remotely affected by the fate of Massachusetts. They were happy, and had no cause, on their own account, for opposition to Great Britain. They commenced it, and ultimately engaged in a defensive war, on speculation. They were not so much moved by oppression actually felt, as by a conviction that a foundation was laid, and a precedent about to be established, for future oppressions. To convince the bulk of the people that they had an interest in foregoing a present good and submitting to a present evil, in order to obtain a future greater good and to avoid a future greater evil, was the task assigned to the colonial patriots." This they effected, in a great measure, as it appears, by means of the press, by pamphlets, essays, addresses, and newspaper dissertations; by public and private letters; meetings and resolutions; petitions and addresses to their governors; by associations, and by a well-organized system of committees. "The events of this time," says Ramsay, "may be transmitted to posterity; but the agitation of the public mind can never be fully comprehended but by those who were witnesses of it."

But here, and through all these earlier chapters of Ramsay, the question to be asked is this: Whether these patriots could have produced these effects, had they not been assisted by the harsh measures of England. It is possible that they would not have tried; but surely they would not have succeeded, if they had.

Speaking of the important year of 1774, "In the counties and towns," says Ramsay, "of the several provinces, as well as in the cities, the people assembled and passed resolutions expressive of their rights, and of their detestation of the late American acts of Parliament. These had an instantaneous effect on the minds of thousands. Not only the young and impetuous, but the aged and temperate, joined in pronouncing them to be unconstitutional and oppressive. They viewed them as deadly weapons aimed at the vitals of that liberty which they adored; as rendering abortive the generous pains taken by their forefathers to procure for them in a new world the quiet enjoyment of their rights. They were the subjects of their meditation when alone, and of their conversation when in company. Within little more than a month after the news of the Boston Port Bill reached America, it was communicated from State to State; and a flame was kindled in almost every breast through the widely extended provinces."

Such are the effects produced, such at all times are the advantages given to the intemperate or ill-designing, by harsh measures. Let the student, in the name of common sense, as well as humanity, be entreated to pause, and to suspect the approach of folly, or something worse, whenever, in the course of a misunderstanding with other countries, any measure which is called "a measure of vigor" is proposed to him.



"Within four months," says Ramsay, "from the day on which the first intelligence of the Boston Port Bill reached America, the deputies of eleven provinces had convened in Philadelphia, and in four days more there was a complete representation of twelve colonies, containing three millions of people. The instructions given to these deputies were various; but in general they contained strong professions of loyalty and of constitutional dependence on the mother country. The framers of them acknowledged the prerogatives of the crown, and disclaimed every wish of separation from the parent state. On the other hand, they were firm in declaring that they were entitled to all the rights of British born subjects, and that the late acts respecting Massachusetts were unconstitutional and oppressive." They\* specified the acts of which they complained; entered into non-importation and non-exportation associations; and prepared addresses to the people of Great Britain and the king. They then dissolved themselves in October, 1774, and agreed to meet in May, 1775.

"Their determinations were no sooner known than they were cheerfully obeyed. To relieve the distresses of the people of Boston, liberal collections were made throughout the colonies; a disposition to do, to suffer, and to accommodate spread from breast to breast, and from colony to colony, beyond the reach of human calculation. It seemed as though one mind inspired the whole. In the midst of their sufferings, cheerfulness appeared in the face of all the people: they counted every thing cheap in comparison with liberty, and readily gave up whatever tended to endanger it. The animation of the times raised the actors in these scenes above themselves, and excited them to deeds of self-denial which the interested prudence of calmer seasons can scarcely credit."

The fifth chapter of Ramsay exhibits the American view of the transactions that took place in Britain during the beginning of 1775: this was the critical period of the contest. Great Britain had commenced her measures of coercion, — America, of resistance. A body of men, the Congress, had assembled, who were considered as the organ through which the wishes and opinions of America were to be conveyed; they had exhibited their cause to the British nation, they had petitioned the king. It was now to be seen, in the conduct of the houses of Parliament, whether civil war was to ensue. Unhappily, the address of the Houses, in answer to his Majesty's speech, declared for coercion, on the 9th of February, 1775. The force in America was to be properly increased. Lord Chatham and Mr. Burke in public, Dr. Franklin and others in public and private, all labored in vain. "The repeal of a few acts of Parliament," says Ramsay, "would at this time have satisfied America." But, confident of victory, the ministers were deaf to petitions and remonstrances. *That* coercion which put the speediest end to the dispute,

\* That is, Congress. See Ramsay, Vol. i. pp. 137 - 142. — N.

it was said, must be eventually the most merciful; and no very long or effective resistance was expected.

Very reasonable observations are here made by Ramsay; and he is even candid enough to observe, that, "unfortunately for both countries, two opinions were generally believed, neither of which was perhaps true in its utmost extent; and one of which was most assuredly false. The ministry and Parliament of England," he says, "proceeded on the idea that the claims of the colonists amounted to absolute independence, and that a fixed resolution to renounce the sovereignty of Great Britain was concealed under the specious pretext of a redress of grievances. The Americans, on the other hand, were equally confident that the mother country not only harboured designs unfriendly to their interests, but seriously intended to introduce arbitrary government." There is probably considerable truth in this observation of Ramsay, on this mutual mistake; and it should be a warning to all good and reasonable men to be very careful how they listen, on the breaking out of a dispute, to the asseverations of those who are of an ardent temper.

The sixth chapter of Ramsay is not less interesting than the former. The preparations on each side for the civil war, — the jealousy of liberty on the one side, the desire of supremacy on the other, — these were cause and effect, and urged both parties, the one to insist on their demands, and the other on submission.

At Boston, in the mean time, from the year 1768, — even from so early a period as 1768, — a military force had been stationed by England. The inhabitants were exasperated against the soldiers, and they against the inhabitants: the one were considered as the mere instruments of tyranny, the other as rioters and smugglers; and there was a constant interchange of insulting words, looks, and gestures. At length, in April, 1775, the sword was drawn; the civil war commenced, and "the blood of those who were killed at Lexington and Concord proved," says Ramsay, "the firm cement of an extensive union. The Americans who fell were revered as martyrs who had died in the cause of liberty. Resentment against the British burned more strongly than ever. The military arrangements, which had been adopted for defending the colonies from the French and Indians, were turned against the parent state; forts, magazines, arsenals, were seized by the provincial militia; and the Lexington battle not only furnished the Americans with a justifying apology for raising an army, but inspired them with ideas of their own prowess. The language of the time was, 'It is better to die freemen than to live slaves.' 'Our houses,' it was said, 'though destroyed, may be rebuilt; but liberty, once gone, is lost for ever.'" The pulpit, the press, the bench, and the bar, severally labored to encourage the resistance that had been resolved upon: religion was connected with patriotism; and in sermons, and in prayers, the cause of America was represent-



ed as the cause of Heaven; pastoral letters were written; a day of fasting and humiliation was appointed: a league and covenant had been formed in an earlier stage of the contest. But nothing could apprise the inaccessible confidence of the British ministry how dangerous was the fury of a people, the descendants of republicans and fanatics, whom they were going, by very unreasonable and very unjustifiable aggressions, to rouse into action.

After the first conflict at Lexington, and the dreadful storming, which was thought necessary by the British, of the American intrenchments at Bunker's Hill, both in 1775, the next event of very great consequence was the declaration of independence, in July, 1776.

You will now observe the arguments that were used; you will see them in the very celebrated pamphlet of Paine, — his *Common Sense*, — a pamphlet whose effect was such, that it is quite a feature in this memorable contest. You may now read it, and wonder how a performance not marked, as you may at first sight suppose, with any particular powers of eloquence could possibly produce effects so striking. Without entering into this question, I must ask you to consider what would have been his materials, if the government of the parent country had continued mild and conciliatory as it was before the year 1763. He endeavours to make out, in the first place, as no doubt he might, that it was better for the continent of America to be an independent nation, than to be dependent on an island three thousand miles off. But when he comes to endeavour to animate the feelings, as he had before attempted to influence the understandings, of his countrymen, what were his words? He writes, you will remember, after the commencement of hostilities; he writes for the purpose of procuring the vote of independence, a year *after* the affair at Lexington and the carnage at Bunker's Hill.

Paine's *Common Sense*, p. 15. — "Men of passive tempers look somewhat lightly over the offences of Britain, and, still hoping for the best, are apt to call out, 'Come, come, we shall be friends again, for all this.' But examine the passions and feelings of mankind, bring the doctrine of reconciliation to the touchstone of nature, and then tell me whether you can hereafter love, honor, and faithfully serve the power that hath carried fire and sword into your land. If you cannot do all these, then are you only deceiving yourselves, and by your delay bringing ruin upon posterity. Your future connection with Britain, whom you can neither love nor honor, will be forced and unnatural, and, being formed only on the plan of present convenience, will, in a little time, fall into a relapse more wretched than the first. But if you say you can still pass the violations over, then, I ask, Hath your house been burnt? Hath your property been destroyed before your face? Are your wife and children destitute of a bed to lie on, or bread to live on? Have you lost a parent or a child by

their hands, and yourself the ruined and wretched survivor? If you have not, then are you not a judge of those who have. But if you have, and still can shake hands with the murderers, then are you unworthy the name of husband, father, friend, or lover; and, whatever may be your rank or title in life, you have the heart of a coward and the spirit of a sycophant."

No man, he afterwards declares, was a warmer wisher for reconciliation than himself, before this fatal battle of Lexington. "Thousands," says he, "are already ruined by British barbarity; thousands more will probably suffer the same fate: those men have other feelings than us who have nothing suffered. . . . I make the sufferer's case my own, and I protest, that, were I driven from house and home, my property destroyed, and my circumstances ruined, that, as a man sensible of injuries, I could never relish the doctrine of reconciliation, or consider myself bound thereby."

Page 21. — "There are thousands and tens of thousands who would think it glorious to expel from the continent that barbarous and hellish power which hath stirred up the Indians and the Negroes to destroy us: the cruelty hath a double guilt; it is dealing brutally by us, and treacherously by them. To talk of friendship with those in whom our reason forbids us to have faith, and our affections, wounded through a thousand pores, instruct us to detest, is madness and folly. Every day wears out the little remains of kindred between us and them; and can there be any reason to hope, that, as the relationship expires, the affection will increase, or that we shall agree better when we have ten times more and greater concerns to quarrel over than ever?

"Ye that tell us of harmony and reconciliation, can ye restore to us the time that is past? Can ye give to prostitution its former innocence? Neither can ye reconcile Britain and America. The last cord is now broken; the people of England are presenting addresses against us. There are injuries which nature cannot forgive; she would cease to be nature, if she did. As well can the lover forgive the ravisher of his mistress, as the continent forgive the murders of Britain. The Almighty hath implanted in us these unextinguishable feelings for good and wise purposes."

Statesmen should, you see, be very careful how they proceed to acts of positive hostility against the towns or inhabitants of any country with whom they ever intend to be on terms of alliance or kindness. "Never can true reconciliation grow, where wounds of deadly hate have pierced so deep." It is of no consequence how unreasonably the sufferers, or their leaders, or their governments, may have conducted themselves *before* the quarrel has been urged to acts of aggression like these. Nature, when in affliction or agony, is deaf and blind, and totally insensible to all suggestions of reason, to all considerations of original right, and the laws of war and of nations;



it clamors for nothing but vengeance ; and men are urged to exasperation and frenzy by the very thought and name of a people whose soldiers have passed through their country, stabbing their friends and kindred, burning their houses, or violating their wives and daughters.

Dr. Ramsay's observations on the independence of America must be read. The affair at Lexington, in April, 1775, exhibited the mother country in an odious point of view ; yet he thinks, for a twelvemonth after, a majority wished only to be reëstablished as subjects of Great Britain in their ancient rights. Some of the popular leaders might have secretly wished for independence from the beginning of the controversy ; but their number he conceives to have been small, and their sentiments not generally known. The coercion attempted by the mother country he considers as the cause that naturally produced the declaration of independence ; and in the short space of two years, nearly three millions of people passed over from the love and duty of loyal subjects to the hatred and resentment of enemies. The people were encouraged by this measure, the declaration of independence, to bear up under the calamities of war ; so were the army.

Paine gives the same representation, in his very curious Letter to the Abbé Raynal. "It was this measure that pledged," he says, "their honor, their interest, their every thing ; and produced that glow of thought and energy of heart which enabled them to endure the gloomy campaign of 1776." And no doubt, as Ramsay observes, "If the interference of France was necessary to give success to the resistance of the Americans, the declaration of independence was also necessary." The one was the price of the other.

The year 1776 was the most important in the contest. In this year the people of America generally took their side. The great mass of the wealth, learning, and influence in all the southern colonies, and in most of the northern, was in favor of the American cause. Some aged persons were exceptions ; a few, too, who had been connected with government ; some, also, who feared the power of Great Britain, and others who doubted the perseverance of America : but a great majority was resolved to hazard every thing. In the beginning of the year 1776, the colonists were farmers, merchants, and mechanics ; at its close, soldiers.

The quotations I have thus made from Ramsay, abridging his paragraphs, but retaining his words, will give you a general idea of the feelings and reasonings of the Americans during the different stages of the contest. Bear them in mind, and let us now turn to consider, once more, the reasonings and feelings of the legislators and the people of England during the same stages of the same contest.

We will refer, as I have announced to you, to the Annual Register. The volumes of this work issued from the press year after year in

succession ; they are, therefore, the very mirrors of the public sentiment. They exhibit the living state of affairs on each side of the Atlantic as they appeared at each period to some very active and intelligent observer, the writer of this work, whose proper business it was to observe. The author, as I have already mentioned, was Mr. Burke ; but the impartiality with which the arguments and views on each side of the question are stated is marvellous.

Begin, if you please, with the eighth volume, for the year 1765, and with the commercial regulations of Mr. George Grenville ; proceed to the Stamp Act, and you arrive immediately at the most clear indications of very general discontent and resistance all over America. This general discontent and resistance is the first point, and one of great consequence ; and this is stated. In the ninth volume you have a description of the ruinous effects of this exercise of the right of Great Britain to tax America, — the effects produced upon the trade and the manufactures on *each* side of the Atlantic. In Great Britain, indeed, men appear to have been divided in opinion on the *right* of taxing America ; but on the *power* of coercing her by the military and naval force of this country there seems to have been no difference of opinion. This point, at this period (in 1765), seems to have been taken for granted.

In 1766, however, the Stamp Act is repealed. It was repealed, because during this interval, and this only, the administration was in the hands of a portion of the Whig party, Lord Rockingham and his friends, who, to their eternal honor, put their theories into practice, their principles of mild government, and showed an attention to the petitions of men who, whether right or wrong, thought they were in danger of being enslaved. But in the twelfth volume we have new attempts to enforce the right of taxation ; we have the tea tax : and in the thirteenth, the arguments on each side of the question. What follows ? In the seventeenth volume we have the riots at Boston, the seizure of the *Gaspée* sloop of war by the populace ; and in consequence of these outrages, an act of Parliament to shut up the port of Boston ; a disposition to carry every thing to extremities on this side of the Atlantic ; the fatal bill for regulating the constitution of Massachusetts ; and even the obsolete act of Henry the Eighth revived and converted, in the most impolitic manner, to the most unexpected purpose, — that of bringing offenders in America to be tried, if necessary, in England. But the eighteenth volume opens with observing that the prognostics of the opposition had been all verified, that the effect of these different acts had been all as injurious as possible ; and in the second chapter we have in America the ominous meeting of a general congress, in September, 1774. The instructions given to the delegates appeared to the editor of the *Annual Register*, though sometimes violent, reasonable and good. The resolutions that were passed, though indicating resistance, were still of a defensive nature.



And we have next their declaration of rights, their petitions and memorials to the king, the people of Great Britain, &c., &c. The strong point of their case seems to be, that they considered themselves as left in a state of happiness and prosperity at the peace of 1763, and that their wish was only to be restored to that former state, and nothing more.

In the mean time, on all these important subjects, it is said by the Annual Register that a very general indifference prevailed in this country. Marvellous this, it may now be thought: America had resisted; and there prevailed, it seems, a very general indifference! Our young members of Parliament were probably occupied only with their dress, their equipage, and their clubs; our country gentlemen with their game laws, and their expected relief from the land tax; and they all, young and old, in town and out, left the affairs of the nation to those wiser heads which, they somewhat rashly supposed, must of course be found in the cabinet!

The philosophic views of the merchants and manufacturers, those of them who were not creditors of American houses, and likely to lose their property by the expected rupture, were, it seems, at this period, about the level of the gay and grave triflers I have just alluded to; and as it was thought that a countenance of resolution, if still maintained, would certainly awe the Americans into obedience, there was a kind of general vote, it seems, that we were to go on, and that the ministry knew best. Prudence in politics was supposed to be like the Christian charity that "hopeth all things, and believeth all things."

The new Parliament met in November, 1774. The ministry were, indeed, reproached with the failure of their predictions, and it was evident not only that the maze was mighty, but that they were all without a plan. Their critics, however, were only seventy-three (the number of opposition), and their admirers (themselves included) two hundred and sixty-four. The peers of the realm were too many of them distinguishable from their inferiors only by their titles. No other claim to superiority was visible. The wisdom of Lord Chatham, like the wisdom of Mr. Burke, was exerted in vain. His assertions and advice should be compared with those of the peers in office who surrounded him in the House. The ministers had taken their ground (in 1774); the supremacy of Great Britain was to be enforced; the Americans could not persevere, as they held, in their systems of self-denial and schemes of non-importation; they could not, it was said, become soldiers. Franklin, with a petition, was not heard; some of the commercial bodies fared not much better; and the numbers of ministry and opposition in the two houses (the measures of the proportion of reasonableness and unreasonableness in each) were about two to one in the upper, and three to one in the lower.\* The propor-

\* The votes at this period, as given in Hansard and the Annual Register, make the proportion in the upper house very different, and certainly indicate no such superiority

tion was better in the upper house on account of the great Whig families found there.

We have next some vacillating conduct of Lord North, and even a kind of conciliatory scheme actually proposed by him in his place, amid the alarm of his friends, and the amazement of all. This was the celebrated occasion when he was upon his legs nine different times to unsay what he had said, because what he had certainly said was found so unpalatable to his friends and supporters. The brighter rays of peace, it seems, that shot athwart his speech, were unwelcome visitants on his own side of the House, "the reign of chaos and old night"; and Sir Gilbert Elliot, Wedderburn, and at last the minister himself, were forced to huddle up in fogs and gloom the rainbow tints that might have indicated too soon that the storm was passing away.

But the storm was not to pass away: force was, in fact, to be tried; and the force determined upon was declared by the opposition to be, as it afterwards proved, inadequate to effect its purpose. We have, in the mean time, very great unanimity in America; the petition from New York, made under very particular circumstances, rejected, as well as Mr. Burke's conciliatory motion, by the British House of Commons. The civil war, therefore, begins in April, 1775. What follows? At the end of the first campaign, at the end of 1775, a regular army, of the most unquestionable discipline and valor, ten thousand men, with all their proper accompaniments of artillery and a naval force, sent out in this impolitic manner to conquer America, had achieved — what? The conquest of Bunker's Hill! — that is, had conquered of the great continent of America just as much space as lay covered, at the end of the action, with the dead and the dying!

over the lower house as is here stated, but quite the contrary. In offset to the vote in the House of Commons, 73 to 264, referred to near the beginning of the paragraph, we have in the House of Lords, at the same time, and on a question of similar character, — an Amendment by the friends of America to the Address of Thanks in answer to the King's Speech at the opening of the session, — a vote of only 13 to 63; nearly five to one in the latter case, against a little over three to one in the former. A few weeks afterwards, on the subject of a Joint Address to the King respecting the Disturbances in America, the votes in the two houses were 296 to 106, and 104 to 29; less than three to one in the lower house, against nearly four to one in the upper. Immediately following this was the Bill for Restraining the Trade of the New England Colonies, the vote upon which in the Commons stood 261 to 85 (a slight relative falling off in the opposition), and in the Lords, as before, 104 to 29. At the opening of the next session, seven months afterwards, on an Amendment, couched in the same terms in both houses, to the Address of Thanks, the votes were 108 to 278 in the lower house, and 29 to 69 in the upper; making the proportions nearly equal, or about five to two against seven to three. On the American Prohibitory Bill, a few weeks later, on which the House of Commons divided no less than six times, the greatest vote in this branch was 207 to 55, or less than four to one, against 78 to 19, or more than four to one, in the Lords. On the subject of employing the Hessian troops, near the close of the session, the votes in the two houses stood 242 to 83, and 100 to 32; a little less than three to one in the lower house, against a little over three to one in the upper. — These seem to have been the only questions relating to American affairs which engaged the joint attention of the two houses at or near the period referred to in the text, the votes upon which are preserved. — N.



It was but a cheerless beginning of this unhappy contest to have coals, and fagots, and vegetables, and vinegar, and hay, oxen, and sheep, transported three thousand miles across the Atlantic, for the support of the gallant men who were sent to reduce the Americans to obedience. Very lucrative contracts might, indeed, be made by individuals, and they and their connections might swell the clamors, — they certainly did, — in and out of Parliament, for the right of taxing America. But all this might happen while the English Channel was strewed, as it was strewed, with the floating carcasses of the animals that were continually perishing in the transports, and while the streets of Boston, our military station, were filled with complaints, and its hospitals with sickness.

One effort more was made by Congress. About August, 1775, Mr. Penn arrived in London with a petition to the king, subscribed by all the members of Congress, and called by the Americans “the olive-branch.” In America it might be called, what it was thought, the olive-branch; but darkness and tempest still dwelt on the face of the waters, and there was no resting-place for him who bore it. Mr. Penn was informed by the minister that no answer could be returned.

This seems an epoch in the dispute: it should be examined by those who mean to reap the instruction of history. The reasonings of the different parties and descriptions of men in and out of Parliament, at this particular period, — the middle and close of the year 1775, — are very remarkable. They will illustrate, I apprehend, the influence of those causes which I have ventured to propose in explanation of the conduct of the mother country: the general ignorance of the real nature of our commercial prosperity; the vulgar notions on political subjects into which communities are always liable to fall; and the very high principles of government which people of property and respectability, under any mixed constitution, are always too ready to insist upon.

Many of the first members in opposition (I quote from the Annual Register), both peers and commoners, it was expected, during the session, were more likely to be found in the Tower, for treasonable practices, than in their places in the two houses. — Sir George Savile and Lord Rockingham in the Tower! — And Mr. Penn declared at the bar of the House of Lords, that, during the whole of his stay in London, he had never been asked a single question relative to America, by any minister or person in power whatever.

During the first half of the year 1776, the war was, it seems, in England not unpopular. National rights were supposed to be invaded; national burdens, it was expected (ludicrous expectations!), would be alleviated. The expenses of the contest were not yet felt; and the hospitals and fields of battle were at a distance. A general carelessness as to the present and the future — perhaps the effect

of prosperity — was very observable in the people of England at this time. The declaration of independence had, it seems, in the latter part of 1776, an unfortunate effect. Instead of showing the people how great had been the mistakes of their rulers, it rather tended to unite them in support of men who had always advised coercive measures, and who insisted that independence had been the secret object of the American patriots *from the first*. The war was considered as unavoidable, and almost as one of self-defence. The king's speech, the debates in Parliament, and the conversations in private society breathed nothing but accusations against the Americans, approbation of our own conduct, and resolutions to resist rebellion and chastise ingratitude.

An enlightened reasoner upon the affairs of mankind would rather have been occupied, all this time, in considering how far it might be wise for Great Britain to make the best of a conjuncture of circumstances so unfortunate, and to attempt some scheme of confederation or amity and alliance with America, on the principle of acknowledging at once that independence which they had asserted. Such would certainly have been the advice of Dean Tucker, and probably of Mr. Robinson: but a community is generally at fifty years' distance from its real philosophers. The majorities in the two houses, on amendments of a conciliatory nature, were two hundred and forty-two to eighty-seven in the lower, and one hundred and twenty-six to ninety-one in the upper.\* The opposition about this time seem even to have seceded, and given up their efforts. It is very difficult, no doubt, for men of rank and intelligence to attend with the patience of physicians, and watch over the diseases of the public mind; but the misfortune is, these secessions never awaken any sympathy in the country, and uniformly fail in their purpose. This particular secession, however, gave occasion to a very remarkable composition which is now regularly published in Burke's Works. It was intended as an address to the king on the subject of this secession, or rather on the general subject of American politics. Being addressed to the sovereign, it could have neither the faults, nor some of the particular merits, of Mr. Burke's other compositions. But it is in its matter very weighty; it is very fine, level writing, and quite a model in its way.

The campaign of 1777 was marked by the successes of General Howe and the misfortunes of General Burgoyne; but the result of two decided victories on the part of the former was only the posses-

\* This is a great mistake. The amendments in question — amendments to the Address of Thanks in answer to the King's Speech at the opening of the session, October 31, 1776 — were rejected in the lower house by a vote of 87 to 242, as is stated in the text; but in the upper house, according to both Hansard and the Annual Register, the numbers were only 26 to 91, including proxies. The largest vote in this branch, during the session, appears to have been that on the Earl of Chatham's motion for an Address to the King to put a Stop to Hostilities in America, May 30, 1777, and including proxies was but 28 to 99. — N.



sion of Philadelphia, and as much of the adjacent country as the British commanded by their arms. The result of the misfortunes of the latter was the entire surrender and capture of the royal army.

The general conclusion from the whole was, that the country presented difficulties that were insurmountable, and that the enemy could not be brought to engage without his consent; that the subjugation, therefore, of the continent was impossible. The English ministers drew no such lessons from these events; but the French did, and immediately resolved to join the Americans.

The opposition, even before the news of the capture of General Burgoyne had arrived, remonstrated loudly, and with great force of argument, against any further attempts at coercion, but in vain. Their amendments were negatived in the Commons, two hundred and forty-three to eighty-six; in the Lords, notwithstanding the exertions and predictions of Lord Chatham, ninety-seven to twenty-eight. Interest of money, it seems, rose; the stocks fell, and so did the value of real estates. The country gentlemen looked blank, and perceived that all was wrong; but, not knowing how to set things right, acquiesced in whatever was proposed to them, — silently, indeed, but they acquiesced.

In the opening of the year 1778, Lord North brought in his conciliatory bills, and produced his creed on the general subject of the American troubles. Neither the creed nor the bills were very good, but they were both three years too late. Reproaches followed from Mr. Fox at his tardy wisdom; and his followers and the country gentlemen sat in mixed indignation and despair. Lord Carlisle was afterwards the bearer of this vain attempt at accommodation. It is impossible for either nations or individuals, in the management of a dispute, to have the benefit of two opposite chances. They may be, from the first, moderate, pacific, magnanimous; they will thus secure *certain* advantages, and they will lose *possible* advantages. They may, on the contrary, be haughty, warlike, and selfish; their chances and advantages will then be the reverse of the former. It is impossible to unite the two.

France joined in March, 1778.\* The ministry and the people of England were furious, though the opponents of the American war had always predicted the event. The only question with these opponents of the war now was, whether America should not immediately be acknowledged an independent power. All idea of the coercion of America must have been now, among reasonable men, at an end. But the ministers waited till another royal army was lost, under Lord Cornwallis; and they had then only to consider how they could keep the Americans in check, protect the West India islands, pacify Ireland, and save England itself from the superior fleets of the enemy.

\* The treaty of alliance with France was signed February 6, 1778; and the French forces arrived in America the following July. Sparks's *Writings of Washington*, V. 325, VI. 3. — N.

Such was the unhappy situation to which the American contest was at last brought by men who were debaters in Parliament, but not statesmen. Their last conciliatory effort reached America in April, 1778. "There was a day," replied General Washington to Governor Trumbull,\* "there was a day, when even this step, from our then acknowledged parent state, might have been accepted with joy and gratitude; but that day, Sir, is past irrevocably."

What I have now delivered to you, borrowing my materials from Ramsay and the Annual Register, will give you some general notion of the instruction to be derived from a comparison of the opinions and feelings of the inhabitants of America with those of the people of this country at each corresponding period.

This kind of instruction may be still further amplified by a reference to the Memoirs of Gibbon. Look at his private letters, and observe the passages where any mention is made of America. I had extracted several of them, meaning to read them to you; but I forbear, lest I should dwell too long upon a lesson that is, from the first to the last, sufficiently striking.

Of the powers of the mind of Gibbon I need not speak, and I must confess that the few sentences which appear in his confidential letters, when written by such a man, and when contrasted, as they should be, with what in the mean time was passing in America, appear to me to speak volumes. Gibbon lived in the first society in London, with Lord North and his friends; was a member of Parliament, and acquainted, no doubt, in a general manner, with their reasonings and measures. The lively, superficial glance which he casts upon these momentous transactions must have been much the same with that of other people of consequence and talents around him; and it is in the same careless, unfeeling, and presumptuous manner that men in easy circumstances, and men of rank and fortune, are but too often talking, writing, and voting, on all concerns of national policy, not immediately connected with their own personal interests. It is necessary that I should declare to you, for it is on this account that I must recommend them to your perusal, that a more lamentable inattention than is displayed in these letters of Mr. Gibbon, from first to last, to all the facts and to all the principles that properly belonged to this great subject of America, one more striking, and, if duly considered, one more valuable, cannot be offered for your instruction. I do not quote them, not only for the reasons I have mentioned, but because the letters are everywhere full of spirit and entertainment, and must, of course, be read by every man of education. I must again and again repeat, that these things are, and ought to be, a warning to us, how we suffer ourselves to be guilty of such faults, in matters of national policy, as even the talents of Gibbon did not protect him from, — how we are either

\* Gov. Trumbull, of Connecticut, to Gov. Tryon, of New York. See Annual Register for 1778, p. 216 \*. — N.



arrogant or selfish, with regard to foreign nations, arbitrary in our notions of government, or consenting to the short-sighted, petty, paltry expedients of vulgar politics.

For Lord North, on this occasion, a man of fine talents and mild temper, there can be no excuse. He must have been guilty of acquiescing in measures the general folly of which he must have resolved to shut out from his view. Either this, or he is an example to show that wit and eloquence and acuteness and dexterity in debate are one thing, while decision, elevation, strength, and clearness of understanding, such as are indispensable in the rulers of mankind, are quite another. He slumbered on, amid the downy pleasures of patronage and social regard; amid shifts and expedients and discreditable failures, vernal hopes and winter disappointments; uniformly a year too late in every project he formed; and while he talked of having followed up the system of his predecessors, of not being the original author of a dispute from which he could not disengage himself, and of having pursued the conduct recommended to him by the advice of Parliament and the wishes of the nation (the unfair excuses, these, and palliatives of bad ministers at all times) he saw the empire gradually dismembered, his administration ending in defeat and disgrace, and his character and fame as a statesman, in the opinion of posterity, lost for ever. This is not to pass too harsh a judgment upon him, nor is it to judge after the event; nothing is now known that was not then known, and nothing happened that was not repeatedly predicted. It was known, for instance, that the Americans were, on their first settlement, republicans; that the Pelhams and the Walpoles had carefully abstained from stirring the critical question of American taxation; the difficulties and irritations connected with the restraint of the contraband trade of the colonies were also known. The spirit shown on the subject of the Stamp Act, both on its enactment and on its repeal, was a matter of the most perfect notoriety. Lord North, and his predecessors, Lord Grenville and Charles Townshend, had nothing to learn with respect to the influence of posts and places on the minds of men; and it was known very well, that the crown had *no* very extensive or effective influence, arising from its patronage in North America. It was clear, therefore, that the precise *merit* of every measure, and its *agreeableness* to the notions, habits, and interests of the people, were points of the utmost consequence. These ministers were aware, or might have been, that this right of taxation was the particular point on which the Americans were sensitive. Fanaticism, as it was well known, made a part of the national character of America. Its transition from religious to civil liberty was very intelligible; it was part of the instruction even of our own history, in the times of Charles the First. It was known that a state of independence on the mother country was (at least, might very possibly be) the ambition of many bolder spirits in America:

again, that this was even the state to which the prosperity of large and distant colonies naturally tends. Every one was aware that different opinions existed in America on the justice of the claims of Great Britain; it was, therefore, the obvious policy of the rulers of Great Britain so to deport themselves, that those who in America undertook their defence should have as good a case as possible against the opposite party. All these things were or might have been known and understood; and when all that was requested by the petitions from America was, in a word, only the renewal of their situation at the peace in 1763, only a return to the old system, what are we to say, when we see these petitions disregarded, troops sent to Boston, soldiers hired from Germany to force into submission such an immense continent as America, situated on the other side of the Atlantic?

There is a progress in these things, but it is from mistake to folly, from folly to fault, from fault to crime; it is at least from fault to the shedding of blood in a quarrel, of which the theoretical justice must have been confessed by every one to be a matter of some debate, but of which the issue, whatever direction it might take, could not have been well expected by *any one* to be favorable to the real interests of the mother country, if the question was once reduced to a question of arms.\*

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## LECTURE XXXIV.

### AMERICAN WAR.

IN my last lecture I endeavoured to exhibit to you the different views that were taken of the same measures and events by the Americans on the one side, and by the British ministers and people on the other. I alluded to passages in the account given by Ramsay, and to passages in the Annual Register; these I recommended to your study. I did so because men fail in the management of a dispute, whether as statesmen or individuals, chiefly because they never enter into the particular views and feelings of those to whom they are op-

\* I had observed in the above lecture, that for Lord North there could be no excuse, what excuse there is I have lately, many years after, had an opportunity of ascertaining. I have seen papers which show that Lord North, after the affair at Saratoga, from the beginning of the year 1778, made every effort to procure from the king permission to resign. These efforts were continually repeated for a long period, but in vain: the king could not give up the idea of coercing America, and therefore could not part with the only man who was, he thought, fit to manage the House of Commons.



posed. Of this fault in mankind no instances can be produced more strong than those which I yesterday exhibited. Paine, the popular writer of America, considered the English nation as one with which no terms were to be kept, — as a “hellish nation,” and her soldiers as “murderers”: yet were these soldiers sent to enforce the measures of Lord North, the most amiable of men, who thought the sovereignty lay in the parent state; that in the rights of sovereignty was included the right of taxation; and as far as the moral part of the case was concerned, believed himself perfectly justified in asserting the supremacy of Great Britain. In this opinion he was supported by a decided majority of the English nation in and out of Parliament; while the pamphlet of Paine, whatever may justly be thought of the coarseness and fury of such terms as I have mentioned, was universally read and admired in America, and is said to have contributed most materially to the vote of independence passed by Congress in 1776. Again, the representations of Ramsay, as well as the known facts, display the violence with which the Americans reasoned and felt; while the pages of the Annual Register show how indifferent or how ignorant were in the mean time the generality of the English people. These are edifying examples of the nature of the human mind to those who will reflect upon them, and as such I yesterday recommended them to your attention: refer to whichever side of the Atlantic you choose, the instruction will be found. I am, however, not speaking to Americans, and it is more fit that I should dwell upon the faults which we ourselves exhibited, more particularly as they lost us half our empire. Certainly there was in England and in her statesmen a total inattention to the particular character, feelings, and opinions of the American people; and to direct your reflection to this particular part and most important part of the subject was, as I have already mentioned, the business of the lecture of yesterday. But I meant you also to see at the same time what I conceive to be the great political lesson of the American dispute, — the impolicy of harsh government; and this, which is the lesson of the American dispute, is also the great lesson of history. I have never failed to point it out to you. There is an instance of this kind very memorable in the annals of Europe, to which I called your attention in a former lecture; as it bears a certain resemblance in many important points to the case before us, I will now again allude to it, and again request you to consider it: it is the instance of the Low Countries and Spain. It can scarcely be necessary to say that no comparison is intended between the project of introducing the Inquisition in the one case and the Stamp Act in the other; but there is a certain analogy in the want of policy in the two cabinets at these different periods, which is sufficiently strong to be worth your observation; in each case the great question was coercion or not, — harsh government or mild.

The lessons of history are neglected by those who are too intemperate to listen to any admonition, from whatever quarter it may come, and by those who have not philosophy enough either to relish historical inquiries, or to separate principles from the particular circumstances by which they may be surrounded. To mark, however, the common appearance of any great principles in the case that is past and in the case before us is to read history with proper advantage; and to see, or not to see, instruction of this kind, is the great distinction between the statesman who may be trusted in critical times, and the mere man of office, who, in all such critical times, is more likely to injure than to serve his country.

In a former lecture, when alluding to the great struggle between Spain and the Low Countries, as I have already said, I mentioned the analogy in many important points between this great contest and our own American dispute. I have since found, on examining the debates in the Commons, that the instance of the Flemings, and their successful resistance to the Spanish monarchy, was not overlooked; it was alluded to by Governor Johnstone, and it is probable that he insisted upon it at some length. I shall make a short reference to the historian Bentivoglio, and take the common translation, that you may not be listening to any representations of mine. You will see the leading points of similarity, I doubt not, without any assistance from me.

“The council of Spain,” says Bentivoglio, “was then full of many eminent personages. Amongst the rest, the Duke of Alva and the Duke of Feria were in great esteem both with the king and council. . . . . These two were of differing opinions. . . . . Upon a certain day, then, when the king himself was in council to resolve what was to be done in this so important business, the Duke of Feria spake thus:—

“ . . . . . ‘To provide for the evils wherewith Flanders is afflicted, ’t is very necessary first to know their causes. And this without all doubt ought chiefly to be attributed to the terror which the Inquisition and the edicts have infused into that country. The Flemish have apprehended, and do apprehend now more than ever, to have their consciences violated by such ways, and to undergo all other greater affliction and misery; and this it is which hath made them fall at last into so many and so heinous outrages. That under which Flanders doth at this present labor is, if I may so call it, a frenzy of fear. . . . . If the bare name of Inquisition . . . . . hath put Flanders into such commotions, what will that nation do when they shall see themselves threatened with the forces of a foreign army? What fear, what horror, will they thereat conceive! . . . . . They will believe that the government of Spain will be by force brought into Flanders; that their privileges will be violated, their institutions overthrown, their faults severely punished, their liberties oppressed by



garrisons, and finally be buried in citadels. . . . . People's fear doth oftentimes degenerate into desperation. So the Flemings growing desperate, and the nobility cloaking themselves no longer under covenants and petitions, nor the common people falling into slight tumults, but the whole country going into a general rebellion, all may, with one accord, oppose our forces, and not suffer them to enter. And say the Flemish were not apt enough of themselves to make this opposition, will they peradventure want neighbours who will use all means to incite them thereunto? . . . . . But let it be granted that the Spanish forces be suffered to enter, . . . . . are we any whit the more secure that the country may not alter afterwards, and be troubled? Great punishments must certainly be undergone, and force must divers ways be secured by greater force. The people there will then begin to despair more than ever; they will call punishment oppression, and severity tyranny, citadels yokes, and garrisons chains and fetters; and thus at last they will break out into rebellion and arms. Thus will the war be kindled. Nor do I know whether it will be afterwards as easily ended as it would have been easy at first not to have begun it. Nature, by the strong situation of sea and rivers, will fight for them; they themselves will fight desperately, in defence, as they will say, of themselves, wives, children, and liberty. The opulency of their own country will furnish them with gallant forces, and much more the opportunity of their neighbours. On the contrary, how heavy a burden of war will your Majesty be to sustain! Succours at so great a distance will prove very slow, and very costly both by sea and land. . . . . The event of war is always uncertain; and fortune, which in other human accidents is content with a part, will here have the whole dominion. If the success prove favorable to your Majesty, the victory will be bought with blood, and against the blood of your subjects. But if the contrary should fall out (which God forbid!), not only men, but states, would be lost; . . . . . and so at last, by too deplorable event, we shall be taught how much fair means would have been better than bitter proceedings for the accommodation of the affairs of those provinces. It is to those fair means that I exhort you, and that by all means you give over any thought of the other. Every province, every kingdom, hath its particular nature, like unto human bodies. . . . . One government is proper for Spain, another for the Indies, another for your states in Italy, and so likewise others in Flanders. . . . . Let the Flemish, then, be permitted to enjoy the government of Flanders. Free them from all suspicion either of Inquisition, foreign forces, or any other more dreaded violence. Let one contrary cure another; so the people's fear ceasing, the country commotions will cease. . . . . Let the punishment of a few serve for the example of all; and let it be laid there where the country may be least exasperated thereby. In fine, clemency becomes a prince; other people are capable of other virtues.'"

But the Duke of Alva thought not so; like the fallen angel of Milton, and like other fallen angels in cabinets and senates, his "sentence was for open war." "To begin," says he, "most puissant Prince, where the Duke of Feria ended, I shall both truly and freely deny that it is now in your Majesty's power to use clemency, which virtue, ill-used, degenerates into abject servility. . . . How long will you endure to receive laws in Flanders, instead of giving them? What remains now but that the Flemish, who upon all occasion boast themselves to be as well free as subjects, having denied all obedience to the Church, may also altogether deny it to you? so as a second Switzers' commonwealth shall be seen to arise; . . . or rather, instead of a popular tyranny, Orange and Egmont, and the other authors of so many base novelties, . . . shall boldly divide those provinces amongst themselves. The affairs of Flanders do at the present lean this way; and shall we talk of pardon? and shall it be in your power to make the Church lose the patrimony of so many of the faithful, and your crown the like of so many opulent countries? . . . Is not your authority oppugned on all sides by covenants, petitions, and a thousand other perfidious practices? You have erred, then, sufficiently already, in using only fair means. And to say truth, to what end hath so long patience and dissimulation served, unless to make the disorders still the greater, and the authors thereof more audacious? . . . My opinion is, that without more delay you send an army into those provinces. . . . On what side shall any one so much as dare to oppose the passage of your forces? Will the Flemish peradventure do it? as if it were as easy to raise an army as to frame a conspiracy, and that the rabble rout will be as ready to fight against armed squadrons as they have been to wage war so wickedly against the sacred images and altars. . . . France is wholly on fire with civil war; a woman sits at the helm of government in England; and what can be feared from Germany, divided amongst so many princes, and so at variance within themselves? Moreover, your case will be theirs: all princes are equally concerned in the people's disobedience; . . . the example reaches always to all. On the contrary, when was ever your empire in greater power and tranquillity? . . . Your forces will, then, without any manner of difficulty, be received in Flanders. . . . And if that frenzy, as it is termed, of fear, but which is, indeed, of perfidiousness, made the Flemish fall blindfold into open rebellion, why ought not your forces hope for all good success against them; yours, which will be so just, and so potent against theirs, which are tumultuary, managed by abject men, rebels to God and to their prince? . . . We shall see the rebellion suppressed almost as soon as born, by those which shall now enter Flanders. . . . Doubtlessly there are variety of governments, but there can be no variance in the bond of obedience which is due by the people unto their prince. Subjects are born with this law; and when they go about to break it, 't is they that use vio-



lence, they receive it not. . . . . Your Majesty shall not, then, use force, save only to suppress force; nor sharp remedies, till after having so long in vain used moderate ones. The wound is degenerated into a gangrene; it requires fire and sword.'"

So thought the Duke of Alva, and fire and sword were applied. The result was, that he returned from the Low Countries, as in after times did the generals of England from America, unable to accomplish the subjection of men whom he had despised; men who might have been retained in obedience by the mild counsels of the Duke of Feria, but who could see in his "sharp remedies," as he termed them, nothing but an excess of cruelty and injustice, that dissolved at once all the ordinary bonds of affection and allegiance.

Other instances might be produced from history; the wisdom, the duty, of mild government I conceive to be the great, but disregarded, lesson of all history.

Passing now from the first part of the general subject, the origin of the dispute, the second seems to be the conduct of it.

The student will be already impatient to know how it could possibly happen that the fleets and armies of this country should be successfully resisted by those who had neither; why Howe did not drive Washington from the field; why regular armies of acknowledged skill and bravery did not disperse every irregular combination of men whenever they appeared, — support the governors of the provinces in the enforcement of British acts of Parliament, — and by the assistance of the loyalists, partly by persuasion and partly by force, assert and establish the sovereignty of the mother country.

Now, to answer this general question, it is necessary to read the history of the American war. The authorities you must more particularly consult are, Washington's Letters, and the Life of Washington by Marshall; Stedman's History of the American War; and the examination into the conduct of Sir William Howe by the House of Commons, which you will find given in the Debates.

I will allude to this general subject of the conduct of the war in the case of Sir William Howe, not only to exhibit to you the proper means of answering to yourselves a very natural question, but for the sake of drawing your attention to other topics perhaps still more important. For instance, I shall refer to the Letters of Washington and to the Life of Washington; and the extracts I shall produce, in the first place, will enable you, and can alone enable you, to judge of the merit of Washington himself, the great character of the last century. In the next place, they will still further substantiate several of the points I have already been endeavouring to establish, — the faults and follies, I mean, of England. You will see the most constant and extreme distress exhibited by Washington in these letters; the great inference you are to draw is, therefore, not only how great must have been the want of enterprise in Sir William Howe, but how great

must have been the original impolicy and subsequent mismanagement of the quarrel on our part, so to exasperate the Americans, that they should think of beginning, of prosecuting, of persevering in a system of resistance under difficulties so serious, distresses so painful, and privations so intolerable.

There are other conclusions to be drawn from these documents, — the superiority, I am sorry to say, of regular armies over all and every description of militia: conclusions, too, with respect to the republican character, and those very unfavorable to it; its ridiculous jealousy, its impracticable nature, its coarseness, its harshness.

Lastly, you will observe, that, while you are reading these accounts of the distresses and difficulties of Washington, you are, in fact, passing over, in your perusal, the materials of the most serious charge that I think can be brought against the American leaders in this dispute; because it is not quite enough that there should be right on the side of those who mean to resist, — there should also be a fair, and, indeed, more than a fair, chance of success. Men cannot be otherwise justified in leading on their countrymen into measures which will be considered by their rulers, or oppressors, if you please, as rebellion, and punished as such by fire and sword. Of all the questions that occur in the whole of this dispute, this seems to me one of the most difficult, — whether the very able men who composed the Congress (admitting the justice of the cause) did or did not hurry on the resistance of their countrymen at too great a rate, and embark in the fearful enterprise of open rebellion against the mother country with means far too disproportionate to the occasion. Of this, it will be said, the actors in the scene were the best and can be the only judges, and that at least they were justified by the event. Perhaps not; — the difficulties they had to struggle with were all most obviously to be expected; while the causes of their success, some of them, and those very important, were not so: no one, for instance, could have presupposed such a want of skill and enterprise in the British ministers and generals.

On the whole, though the attempt of Great Britain permanently to establish a system of taxation by force was, from the first, not a little hopeless, from the distance and impracticability of the country and the spirit and unanimity of the inhabitants, and though it was an attempt that could not *ultimately* be successful, still it must be allowed, on the other side, that the American leaders won the independence of their country at a much *less* expense of carnage and desolation, long as the war lasted, than they had any reason to expect. But you must consider the books which I have mentioned. In the mean time, I will make some references to these authorities, and as much as possible use the words I find in them, as I have before done while adverting to the History of Ramsay.

There is a small volume purporting to be Letters of Washington,



and in which are included several to *Mrs. Washington*; these are not genuine.\* Those letters which are authentic rest upon the authority of an appeal to Mr. Pinckney, at that time the American ambassador. They do not descend lower than December, 1778; they comprehend but a part of what the editor has collected. On the whole, these letters rather disappoint expectation; they partake too much of the nature of state papers. They were, indeed, addressed to Congress, and are written in a manner so calm and sedate, that they give but an imperfect portrait of what we wish to see,—the various hopes and disappointments that must have affected the mind of Washington in the course of so singular a contest. They make out, however, two main points: that Washington, while of a temperament, on great occasions, the most deliberate and reasonable, always considered the cause of America as the cause of freedom and right; secondly, that his difficulties were such as no general was ever before able to contend with, for so long a continuance. These letters, indeed, stop short at the end of 1778; but these points would only have been more fully displayed, if they had been continued to the end of the contest.

Washington took the command immediately after the affair at Bunker's Hill, in 1775. Want of gunpowder was the first difficulty, in June, 1775; the defence of lines so extensive is the second; the want of money, engineers, &c., &c., immediately follows; and no dependence, the general officers told him, could be put on the militia for a continuance in camp, or regularity and discipline during the short time they might stay. "In the mean time," says he (July, 1775), "there are materials for a good army, a great number of able-bodied men, active, zealous in the cause, and of unquestionable courage." In August, 1775, he observes,— "The enemy, finding us so well prepared, mean to bombard us out of our present line of defence, or are waiting in expectation that the colonies must sink

\* These spurious letters, comprising five to Mr. Lund Washington, one to John Parke Custis, Esq., and one only to Mrs. Washington, were first published in London, in 1777, in a small pamphlet entitled "Letters from General Washington to Several of his Friends in the Year 1776." "The object of the fabricator," says Mr. Sparks, "was to disparage General Washington, and create distrust in the minds of his countrymen, by showing, from his private sentiments unguardedly expressed to his friends, that he was acting a hypocritical part, being in reality opposed to the war." In 1796, these letters were republished at New York, for factious purposes, and in the course of the same year in London also, in a small octavo volume, with a number of genuine letters, and other papers, bearing various dates, from 1777 to 1783, under the title of "Epistles Domestic, Confidential, and Official, from General Washington." This work is doubtless the one alluded to in the text, yet not the one from which the extracts that follow are taken; the latter being a collection in two volumes, embracing the correspondence from June, 1775, to December, 1778, compiled from the original papers in the office of the Secretary of State in Philadelphia, and first published in London, in 1795, under the title of "Official Letters to the Honorable American Congress, written, during the War between the United Colonies and Great Britain, by his Excellency, George Washington."— See Sparks's Writings of Washington, Vol. v. p. 379, and Vol. xi. pp. 183--185, 192--194; also, Official Letters, Vol. i., Advertisement.— N.

under the weight of the expense, or the prospect of a winter campaign so discourage our troops as to break up our army." These were, no doubt, the expectations of the British commanders. "Our situation," he says, "in the article of powder, is much more alarming than I had the most distant idea of, — not more than nine rounds a man." In September, 1775, he says to Congress, — "My situation is inexpressibly distressing, — to see the winter fast approaching upon a naked army, the time of their service within a few weeks of expiring, and no provision yet made for such important events. Added to these, the military chest is totally exhausted; the paymaster has not a single dollar in hand; the commissary-general assures me he has strained his credit, for the subsistence of the army, to the utmost; the quartermaster-general is precisely in the same situation; and the greater part of the troops are in a state not far from mutiny, upon the deduction from their stated allowance: if the evil is not immediately remedied, and more punctuality observed in future, the army must absolutely break up," &c., &c.

In October, 1775, he says, — "Gage is recalled; five regiments and a thousand marines are ordered out; no prospect of accommodation, but the ministry determined to push the war to the utmost." In November, 1775, he says, — "As there is every appearance that this contest will not be soon decided, would it not be eligible to raise two battalions of marines in New York, &c.?" At the end of November, 1775, he says, — "Our situation is truly alarming; and of this General Howe is well apprised: it being the common topic of conversation when the people left Boston last Friday. I am making the best disposition I can for our defence, having thrown up several redoubts," &c.

Howe was all this time at Boston and Bunker's Hill; Washington not far distant, in an intrenched camp at Cambridge. In December, 1775, he says, — "Last Friday the major part of the Connecticut troops were going away with their arms and ammunition; we have, however, by threats, persuasion, and the activity of the people of the country, who sent back many of them that had set out, prevailed upon the most part to stay." In January, 1776, he observes to Congress, — "It is not in the pages of history, perhaps, to furnish a case like ours: to maintain a post, within musket-shot of the enemy, for six months together, without powder, and at the same time to disband one army and recruit another, within that distance of twenty-odd British regiments, is more, probably, than ever was attempted." His letter of January 14, 1776, opens thus: — "I am exceedingly sorry that I am under the necessity of applying to you, and calling the attention of Congress to the state of our arms, which is truly alarming, &c., &c. Supplies are wanting, and the enlisting goes on so very slow, that it almost seems at an end." His letter of February 9, 1776, was intended to show Congress the difference that must



ever exist between regular soldiers and all sorts of militia, or men who enlist for a short time, and may leave the army when in presence of the enemy. His observations, drawn from his own experience, must be considered as decisive. But the jealousy which Congress entertained of a regular army was so great, that Washington is obliged to begin and conclude his letter with a sort of apology for recommending it so earnestly to their adoption.

Independence was declared in July, 1776; it is therefore important to remark an expression five months before, in February. "I am entirely of your opinion," says he, "that, should an accommodation take place, the terms will be severe or favorable in proportion to our ability to resist, and that we ought to be on a respectable footing to receive their armaments in the spring." The possibility of conciliation seems here taken for granted; that is, independence was not *then* the idea of Washington, five months before the declaration.

At this very moment (February, 1776) he declares there were near two thousand men without firelocks. His letters continue to speak of embarrassments for want of proper supplies through the months that follow; but on the 10th of July, immediately after the declaration of independence, he writes thus: — "I trust the late decisive part Congress have taken is calculated for our happiness, and will secure us that freedom and those privileges which have been and are refused us, contrary to the voice of nature and the British constitution. Agreeably to the request of Congress, I caused the *Declaration* to be proclaimed before all the army, and the measure seemed to have their most hearty assent; the expressions and behaviour both of officers and men testifying their warmest approbation of it." The conclusion of his letter is more animated than usual; calmness, that useful, but disagreeable quality, was the very essence of his character, was so on all public occasions at least: — "The intelligence we have is, that the British look for Admiral Howe's arrival every day, with his fleet and a large reinforcement; are in high spirits, and talk confidently of success, and carrying all before them, when he comes. I trust, through Divine favor, and our own exertions, they will be disappointed in their views, and at all events any advantages they may gain will cost them very dear. If our troops will behave well, — which I hope will be the case, having every thing to contend for that freemen hold dear, — they will have to wade through much blood and slaughter, before they can carry any part of our works, if they carry them at all, and at best be in possession of a melancholy and mournful victory. May the sacredness of our cause inspire our soldiery with sentiments of heroism, and lead them to the performance of the noblest exploits!"

In August, 1776, before the attack of Howe on Long Island and New York, he considers himself as having ten thousand five hundred men fit for duty, sick three thousand, on command about as many

more, — in all, about seventeen thousand. "These things," he says, "are melancholy. So far as I can judge from the professions and apparent disposition of my troops, I shall have their support; the superiority of the enemy and the expected attack do not seem to have depressed their spirits." After the victories of Howe, September 2d, he writes, — "Our situation is truly distressing. The militia are dismayed, intractable, and impatient to return; great numbers of them have gone off, in some instances almost by whole regiments. With the deepest concern I am obliged to confess my want of confidence in the generality of the troops. I have more than once," he continues, "taken the liberty of mentioning to Congress, that no dependence could be put in a militia. I am persuaded that our liberties must of necessity be greatly hazarded, if not entirely lost, if their defence is left to any but a permanent standing army, — I mean, one to exist during the war."

His letter of 8th September, 1776, is very important, and contains his ideas on the late and future operations of the war, but it is too long to quote. "We should on all occasions," says he, "avoid a general action, nor put any thing to the risk, unless compelled by a necessity into which we ought never to be drawn. The war should be defensive, a war of posts. I have never spared the spade and pickaxe." He never did afterwards spare them. The affair at Bunker's Hill had shown what it was to fight from behind intrenchments. The country gave opportunities for this species of defence, and the war was thus protracted by Washington till the irregular and undisciplined troops of America became in time fit to be opposed, in pitched battles, if necessary, to the regular troops of England and Germany.

But Washington had no proper powers intrusted to him by the Congress. These jealous republicans hazarded their cause to the utmost, rather than give their general the means of saving them from their enemies. This sort of impracticable adherence to a principle is always the characteristic of democratic men and democratic bodies. It is sometimes their praise, but more often their fault. The respectful patience with which Washington waited for the influence of his representations on his constitutional rulers exceeds all description, and certainly far exceeds the patience of those who read his letters. The lowest point of depression was at this moment, December, 1776. But the enterprise at Trenton, where he surprised a part of the British army, and which was the great achievement of the military life of Washington, then followed, — the achievement that inspired with some hope the despairing friends and armies of America, and which enabled him to maintain a show of regular resistance to the superior forces of the British commanders. His own account of this affair, December 27th, is singularly modest and concise.

The year 1777 opens with a letter in which he evidently expects



very favorable effects from the ill conduct of the British in the Jerseys. "If what the people of Jersey have suffered does not rouse their resentment, they must not possess the common feelings of humanity. To oppression, ravage, and a deprivation of property, they have had the more mortifying circumstance of insult added. We keep up appearances," says he, "before an enemy double to us in numbers. Our situation is delicate and truly critical, for want of a sufficient force to oppose the enemy."

Now it was about this time, and in this situation of things, that the Congress expressed to him their wishes (such was their reasonableness) that "he would confine the enemy within their present quarters, prevent their getting supplies from the country, and totally subdue them before they were reinforced." They do not exactly desire him to step over to London, and send them Lord North and Lord George Germain in irons, but I really have quoted the very terms in which they expressed themselves.\* The good-temper of Washington is astonishing. "The inclosed return," says he, "comprehends the whole force I have in Jersey; it is but a handful, and bears no proportion, on the scale of numbers, to that of the enemy; added to this, the major part is made up of militia. The most sanguine in speculation," says he, "cannot deem it more than adequate to the least valuable purposes of war."

These notices, drawn from different letters (they proceed in the same strain to the end), will give you some idea of the work before us. The letters, you will see, however cold and formal, may serve to afford you a proper notion of the contest, and more particularly of the merit of Washington. You will scarcely be able regularly to read them, though you will easily perceive that they must be read very patiently by any historian of these times, and that, if particular

\* The terms in which Washington alludes to this matter are somewhat ambiguous, — sufficiently so, it must be acknowledged, to afford an opening for the amusing light in which it is here presented; but a reference to the Journals of Congress places it in quite a different aspect. It appears to have been the design to strike a vigorous, and, if possible, a decisive, blow at the enemy, in anticipation of the arrival of reinforcements from England. In pursuance of this design, Congress, on the 24th of February, 1777, passed a resolution requiring the new recruits to join the army under Washington immediately, and calling out the militia of New Jersey and Pennsylvania, — "in order," says the preamble, "farther to strengthen the hands of the general"; "it being the earnest desire of Congress," as is added in conclusion, "to make the army under the immediate command of General Washington sufficiently strong, not only to curb and confine the enemy within their present quarters, and prevent them from drawing support of any kind from the country, but, by the Divine blessing, totally to subdue them before they can be reinforced." In commenting upon this resolution, in a letter of the 14th of March following, Washington observes, — "Could I accomplish the important objects so eagerly wished by Congress, — 'confining the enemy within their present quarters, preventing their getting supplies from the country, and totally subduing them before they are reinforced,' — I should be happy indeed." Professor Smyth's construction of this language is, perhaps, natural enough, apart from the consideration, which at once suggests itself, of the intrinsic improbability that any deliberative body of sane men could have intended any thing so absurd as he supposes but it is clear that there is nothing in the resolution itself to support it. — N.

points are to be settled, they must be referred to. You will remember that I have already announced to you that these letters may supply many more conclusions than such as relate to the merit of General Washington.

But there is another work which you may more readily meet with, — the *Life of Washington*, by Marshall. The work is, indeed, chiefly compiled from Washington's correspondence, and a life of Washington is of course a history of the American war. To the first volume of this work I have referred you on former occasions. Our present subject begins to be treated in the second volume; it is continued through the next three quartos, but they are not large or closely printed; and as much of the *military* part may be looked at rather than read, they will not occupy you too long. Of the fifth volume I shall speak hereafter.

The conclusions which you will draw from the pages of Marshall you will find much the same as those that you would derive from Ramsay. The more appropriate value of the work consists in the description of the distresses of Washington. You may here, too, gain some idea of the views and counsels of Washington and the Congress from time to time; and you may compare them with those of the British generals and statesmen to be found in other publications. I do not detain you with these considerations, because you will read this work of Marshall more readily than the former work, the *Letters of Washington*. You will have the same instruction afforded you in a less disagreeable manner.

We will now advert to the *History of Stedman*. This is the work where may be found the most distinct materials for the censure of Sir William Howe. Stedman evidently thought that the cause was lost by his want of capacity. Stedman served under Howe, Clinton, and Cornwallis; and when the conduct of the war is to be estimated, he must be consulted. But I consider him of no authority on any subject which is not connected with his profession. His account is merely that of a sensible, well-meaning, and probably very good officer. He forms no views, is no statesman, and his work should be considered only as offering us a very good specimen of what were probably the opinions and feelings of intelligent officers serving in the British army at the time. But what intelligent officers thought is by no means an uninteresting part of the subject, and I therefore recommend his book. Enter into the military details as much or as little as you please, but gather up his sentiments and opinions whenever you can find them, considering them as the objects of your speculation, not of your confidence.

After these few remarks, I will not occupy your time with any further comments on this particular history. I had prepared many; but if your mind has been properly enlarged by the writings I have recommended, more particularly the speeches of Mr. Burke, you will



be sufficiently secure from the misapprehensions, confined views, and arbitrary notions, which were entertained by Stedman, — I doubt not, a very respectable officer, but it is quite out of the question to suppose him fit to direct your judgments on such topics as he often decides upon.

But as a man like Stedman, connected with the military profession, was very naturally inclined rather to depend on the exertions of authority, and to see the propriety of its claims, than to trust to the distant effects of mild government, he is naturally referred to by authors and reasoners like Adolphus, who, without the excuse of the same profession, have the same arbitrary inclinations and opinions. There are some facts and anecdotes given by Stedman not to be found in others. He has the appearance, too, of being honest, and of speaking freely what he thought. Stedman must be consulted, in his eighth chapter more particularly, by those who would judge of the failure of our arms in the dispute.

It was during the campaign of 1776, and at the close of it, when it was for Sir William Howe to have struck some important blow. The enemy were unable to stand before the British troops in the field; the American army had diminished from thirty thousand almost to three thousand; Washington was scarcely able to maintain the appearance of a regular force: and Stedman insists that the general panic had extended itself from the military to all the civil departments; the Congress had retired into Maryland; Philadelphia only waited the arrival of the British army to submit to the mother country; other parts would have done the same; New York was already in Howe's possession. These advantages were neglected, and other material errors, which he states, were in his opinion committed. I cannot enter into the details in this and in other parts of his work. You will consider also his twentieth chapter, where he finds another opportunity of renewing his censures when the general takes leave of his command.

The blame that belonged to the failure of our arms in America became, of course, a subject of dispute between the general and the secretary of war, Lord George Germain.

In this question is involved, as I have already intimated, more than the character of either; and they who examine it will be continually led away to the more important question of the original probability of conquering America by any force which it was competent for this country to have sent across the Atlantic. On this account, and on account of many curious particulars which appeared in the course of the examination, I would recommend it to you to consult the Debates. The labor will not be great. You will find General Howe, on his return, declaring in the House that he had resigned his command (I quote his words) "in consequence of a total disregard to his opinions, and to his recommendations of meritorious officers; that the war had

not been left to his management, and yet when he applied for instructions, he frequently could not get them." Lord George Germain expressed some surprise at so unexpected an attack; said his recommendations had been complied with, except in three instances, which he explained; declared that he had always seconded the plans of the general; and that, if the general had not instructions when he called for them, it was because many things depended on unforeseen circumstances, and it was impossible to send letters every day across the Atlantic; that the general must necessarily, in many respects, be left to his own discretion.

Perhaps these few words that I have quoted from these two speeches are sufficient to decide, without any further inquiry, the merits both of the general and of the secretary. If the general, on the one hand, supposed, that, unless he was left entirely to his own discretion, he could not overpower Washington and the Congress, — or if, on the other hand, the secretary imagined, that, while sitting at Whitehall, he had the slightest chance of conquering the continent of America, or even of materially assisting those whom he sent for the purpose, it was evident at once, that neither the general nor the secretary had genius enough to execute, or even properly to comprehend, the enterprise which was before them.

An inquiry took place to satisfy General Howe, and not Lord George Germain. The general entered on his defence, and insisted that the papers before the House made out for him four points: first, that he supplied the ministry, from time to time, with proper information; secondly, that he gave his own opinions on what was practicable with the force on the spot, and with such succours as he expected; thirdly, that his plans were carried into execution with as little deviation as could have been expected; and, fourthly, that he never flattered the ministry with improper hopes of seeing the war terminated in any one campaign, with the force at any one time under his command. The general then proceeded to his defence; and the student, as he reads it, will find himself silenced, if not satisfied, and that to a much greater degree than he could have expected. The great question is, why the general did not attempt some decisive enterprise at the close of the campaign of 1776, about the time of the surprise at Trenton. The general seems always to have respected his enemy more, than the student might think necessary; but it would be rather presumptuous to judge for him on this point. Instead of immediately making any important effort, he wrote for a reinforcement of fifteen thousand men and a battalion of artillery. The force could not be sent, and this opportunity — which was, in fact, a striking one — was lost.

You will see the defence of Lord George Germain at page 391,\*

\* Parliamentary Register; or History of the Proceedings and Debates of the House of Commons, &c. (London, 1779), Vol. xii. pp. 391–394. — N.



the main point of which is, that he admitted, that, "after the affair at White Plains [in 1776], when the rebel army was all one as annihilated, the general demanded a large reinforcement, fifteen or twenty thousand men; but that for his part, against an enemy flying on every side, scarcely a battalion in any one body, and at the head of a victorious, well-disciplined army, combined with the information of persons well informed on the spot, and on his own judgment, he thought then, and now, that such a requisition on the part of the commander-in-chief ought not to be complied with."

Now here appears to me to turn the main hinge of the question between the secretary and the general, and the answer of the secretary seems not sufficient. It was for the general to judge of the quantity of force, not for him; and the better answer would have been, not that he *would* not, but that he *could* not, comply with the requisition, and this answer would probably have been the real truth. To have said *this*, however, would have been to suggest to the opposition the incompetence of Great Britain to make a sufficient effort to conquer America at all, and the original folly of attempting it; and this, therefore, could not be said.

The twelfth \* volume of Debates opens with the examination of Lord Cornwallis and Sir Charles Grey. They are very decided in their testimony in favor of Sir William. The evidence of both goes to show the impracticability of the country; and of Sir Charles, to prove the inadequacy of the force which was sent. But he joined late, — not till June, 1777.

Lord George Germain then brings up his evidences, General Robertson and Mr. Galloway. Much is made to depend on the evidence of Galloway by the historian Adolphus; but you will see such conversation taking place in the House of Commons, with respect to Galloway's memory, situation, and other particulars, that you will receive with great hesitation any representations founded on his opinions.

At last you will find that the inquiry suddenly stops short. The general is absent, and the committee breaks up and expires. The general says, the next day, that his absence was no proper reason why it should do so. The two brothers ask the secretary, whether, after having heard the evidence, he has any accusation to make. He is silent, and the whole business is at an end; not very intelligibly, or much to the credit of any of the parties concerned, — the general, the secretary, or the House.

On the whole, the conclusion seems to be, that success could not have been accomplished, unless Howe had been more enterprising or England more powerful; that America was a country so impracticable and so distant, that, considering the spirit of resistance which had

\* The thirteenth (Parl. Reg.), pp. 1 - 32. — N.

been shown, no reasonable hope could be entertained of ultimately controlling the inhabitants by force of arms.

Marshall, in his *Life of Washington*, probably speaks the general opinion of intelligent men in America. He conceives that Sir William Howe might, on some occasions, have acted more efficiently, but, in doing so, that he would have risked much. Victories like that of Bunker's Hill, or that claimed by Burgoyne in September, 1777, would have ruined the royal cause. Howe's system he conceives to have been, to put nothing to hazard, and to be very careful of his troops. "Howe probably supposed," he says, "that the extreme difficulties under which America labored, the depreciation of the paper money, the annual dispersion of her army by the expiration of the terms of their enlistment, the privations to which every class of society had to submit, would of themselves create a general disposition to return to the ancient state of things, if the operation of these causes should not be counteracted by brilliant successes obtained over the British by Washington." Now it is very possible that Howe did reason in this manner; but the train of reasoning would have been more solid, if it had concluded in a manner exactly opposite: for instance, that these causes would not create a general disposition in the Americans to return to the ancient state of things, *unless* he could assist their operation by obtaining some brilliant successes over Washington.

There is a summary account given in the twenty-second volume of the *Annual Register*: it is full of matter and very concise, though too long to be quoted here. The reader is left to infer, that the force was inadequate, and the ministers were told so; that the country, on the whole, was too hostile and too impracticable, to leave it possible for the army to carry on its operations at any distance from the fleet; that, according to the rules of military prudence, there was no enterprise, from time to time, that appeared likely to be attended with success; that so far the fault is clearly with the ministry: that, on the other hand, in the midst of all these difficulties, the general should have seen the necessity of striking some blow immediately, and if he did not choose to risk it, should have resigned his command.

I must now repeat, that I have adverted to this subject on the merits of General Howe, not only to furnish some general answer to one of the first questions which the student will naturally ask, but to remind him, that, while he is gratifying his curiosity, he must necessarily place before his view — and that he ought to observe them — two of the most important points connected with the American dispute: whether, for instance, the original idea of conquering America by force was ever reasonable on our part; and again, whether the resolution of the principal men of America at all events to hazard rebellion against the mother country was properly justified at the



time by their probable means of resistance. Finally, it is in this manner that the student can best be taught, in some degree, to comprehend the extraordinary merit of Washington.

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## LECTURE XXXV.

### AMERICAN WAR.

HITHERTO I have alluded chiefly to the origin of this unhappy civil war; the causes of which, as they operated on each side of the Atlantic, you will even now be able, in a general manner, to estimate. Of these general causes, too many of those that operated with us, those that I have enumerated, for instance, may, I think, be held up to the censure and avoidance of posterity. The more they are analyzed, the less can they be respected; and it was very fit, and even desirable, that the haughty and selfish sentiments, the unworthy opinions, by which the people of Great Britain and their rulers were led astray, should not only be resisted, but successfully resisted.

And yet it is not so easy to come to a decision on the American part of the case. The colonies were from the first connected with the British Empire. They had grown up, under its influence, to unexampled strength and prosperity. A principle was, no doubt, on a sudden brought forward by the British minister, which might have been carried to an extent, and, if unresisted, would probably have been carried to an extent, materially injurious to their liberties; but it had not been carried to any such extent when acts of fury and outrage were committed in the province of Massachusetts; and we assent to, rather than enter into, the reasonings of the Americans. We are surprised and struck with the fervor of their resistance, rather than sympathize with it; certainly we do not feel the glow of indignation against the mother country which, on other occasions, of Switzerland and the Low Countries, for instance, we have felt against the superior state. That the British nation was wrong, and deserved to be severely punished, must be allowed; but to lose half its empire, and to have America and Europe rejoicing in its humiliation and misfortunes, as in the fall of tyranny and oppression, is more than a speculator on human affairs, in this country at least, can be well reconciled to. The punishment seems disproportioned to the fault; — the fault, however, must not be denied. It was one totally unworthy of the English people, the very essence of whose constitution, its safeguard,

its characteristic boast, its principle from the earliest times, the very object of all its virtuous struggles, and for which its patriots had died on the scaffold and in the field, was this very principle of representative taxation.

I must now, therefore, recall to your minds my observation, that the causes which led to the American war were not all of them, in their feeling and principle, discreditable to our country. For instance, a particular notion of political right had a great effect in misleading our ministers and people, and hurrying them into measures of violence and coercion. It was of the following nature: all general principles of legislation and national law seem to lead to the conclusion, that the sovereignty must remain with the parent state, and that the power of taxation is involved in the idea of sovereignty. Even Burke seems to have been of this opinion, and the Rockingham part of the Whigs. But this was a point much contested at the time. The reverse was loudly insisted upon by Lord Chatham and his division of the Whigs: that the general powers of sovereignty were one thing, and the particular power of taxation another, — that this species of sovereignty, taxation, could not be exercised without representation.

And thus much must, at least, be conceded to Lord Chatham, — that, in practice, this distinction had always existed in the European governments, derived from the Barbarian conquerors of the Roman Empire. This power of taxation was always supposed to be the proper prerogative of the people, or of the great assemblies that were quite distinct from the wearer of the crown. The granting or refusing of supplies was always considered as a matter of grace and favor to the sovereign, — not of duty; and as something with which they were enabled to come, if I may so speak, into the market with their rulers, and truck and barter for privileges and immunities. But however this original point, of the right of taxation being included in sovereignty, be determined; whether it be admitted, or not, in the abstract and elementary theory of government, which is the first question; and whether it be admitted, or not, in any ideas we can form of our feudal governments of Europe, which is the second question; still, the same point assumed a very different appearance, and became another and a third question, when this sovereign right of taxation was to be practically applied to colonies, situated as were those of America, and by a mother country, enjoying the kind of free constitution which Great Britain at the time enjoyed. The question of taxation, under these circumstances, became materially and fundamentally altered; and for the rulers and people of Great Britain to set up a right, one, if it existed at all, certainly of a very general and abstract kind, and even to carry it into practical effect, without the slightest accommodation to the feelings of freemen and the descendants of freemen, — without offering the slightest political



contrivance, the slightest form of representation, by which the property of the Americans could be rendered as secure as is the property of the inhabitants of Great Britain, — without the slightest attempt to avail themselves of the colonial governments existing in America at the time; for the rulers and people of Great Britain to be so totally deaf and insensible to all the reasonings and feelings which had dignified the conduct of their ancestors from the earliest period, and which at that moment continued to dignify their own, — was to show a want of genuine sympathy with the first principles of the English constitution, and the first principles of all relative justice, — was to show such carelessness of the happiness and prosperity of others, and such haughty contempt and disregard of the most obvious suggestions of policy and expediency, that it is not at all to be lamented that the ministers and people of this country should fail in their scheme of unconditionally taxing America, should be disgraced and defeated in any such unworthy enterprise. And it is ardently to be hoped, that all nations, and all rulers of nations, and all bodies of men, and all individuals, should eternally fail and be discomfited, and, according to the measure of their offences, be stigmatized and made to suffer, whenever they show this kind of selfish or unenlightened hostility to such great principles as I have alluded to, — the principles of civil freedom, of relative justice, and of mild government.

After having thus considered the original grounds of the war, when I came in the last lecture to advert to the conduct of the war, I pointed out to you the most curious and difficult question which the whole contest affords: whether the American leaders did not hurry into positive rebellion before they had sufficient grounds to suppose they could resist what was then the greatest empire on earth.

The fact seems to have been, that resistance ripened gradually and insensibly into rebellion. The leaders had incurred the penalties of treason before they could well have asked themselves to what lengths they were prepared to go. They always debated with closed doors, so that what were their exact views, and the progress of their opinions, cannot now be known. But the strange, incoherent manner in which both they and the people of America seemed to have supposed that the dispute would be terminated each year, in the course of that year, or the next, is very striking, and shows how little they were aware of the magnitude of the enterprise in which they had engaged. This is true in general; but particular individuals were more wise. Instances certainly did occur, and some are on record, of men who were aware how perilous was the course which, at the opening of the dispute, the patriots were pursuing. "We are not to hope," said Mr. Quincy, to the meeting assembled at Boston in 1774, "that we shall end this controversy without the sharpest, sharpest conflicts. We are not to flatter ourselves, that popular resolves, popular harangues, popular acclamations, and popular vapor will vanquish our foes. Let

us weigh and consider, before we advance to those measures which must bring on the most trying and terrible struggle this country ever saw."

But on the whole, the general enthusiasm that was excited by this single principle, the fundamental principle of the American controversy, that the Parliament of Great Britain had no right to tax them, is quite unexampled in history; and that men should act on the foresight and expectation of events just as if the events were present, and should endure as much to avoid the approach of oppressive tax-gatherers as if they were already in their houses, is a perfect phenomenon in the records of the world, and a very curious specimen of that reasoning, sagacious, spirited, determined attachment to the principles of civil liberty which so honorably distinguished the ancestors of these Americans, the very singular men who flourished in the times of Charles the First, and who, whatever may be their faults, did certainly rescue from imminent danger the civil liberties of these islands.

I have hitherto, through all these lectures on the subject of the American dispute, been obliged to direct your attention to the ill effects of harsh government, to the unfortunate nature of high and arbitrary notions, when the interests of mankind are concerned, — their civil liberties at home, — their sense of relative justice to other states abroad: but the lessons I am now called upon to offer you, through this and the ensuing lecture, are of a different kind; and it will now be my business continually to remind you, that, though government ought not to be harsh, still that government must exist; and that, whatever may be the temptations to which all executive power is exposed, still that somewhere or other executive power must be found, or there will be no chance for the maintenance of justice and right among mankind.

For as we proceed to consider still further the conduct of the American leaders, the principal and I had almost said the only remaining observation I have to make is this: that through the whole course of the accounts, as given by the American writers, the reflection that is continually presenting itself is the objectionable nature of the purely republican form of government; the total inadequacy of all forms strictly democratical for the management of mankind, where any management is required, — their management, I mean, according to the proper principles of equity and wisdom. I do not think that any sober-minded speculator on government could ever have had much doubt on the subject, yet I conceive that any such doubt will be entirely at an end with those who peruse the volumes of Marshall, or even of Dr. Ramsay; for we are continually led to remark, through every stage of the contest, the want of a proper executive government on the part of the Americans, and the evils that hence ensued; and though the case before us is the case of a country at war, where the difficulties must necessarily be not of an ordinary nature, and the



executive government ought to be particularly strong, still the conclusion is inevitably transferred to a country in a state of peace, so strong are the instances everywhere displayed of the impracticable nature of the human character, of the entire necessity that exists in every community for some controlling, superintending, executive power, — some power that shall bind up, and bring into proper effect, and reduce to the proper standard of equity and reason, all the divided, dispersed, ardent, and often very ill-directed energies of the individuals that compose any society of human beings. Freedom must be enjoyed, and men must not lose their nature and be driven by their keepers like the beasts of the field; but neither must they be so enamoured of self-rule as to admit of no paramount directors and governors. The public rights and privileges for which they should contend are not the power of self-rule, nor even the immediate and palpable direction of the measures of their government, the great aim and boast of purely republican forms; but the privileges of peaceful criticism on their government, the power of subsequent censure, the acknowledgment in the rulers of a delegated rather than an original authority, and a reference of their measures to the interest of the community. These are the points for which they should contend, — the points which, as a government is more or less perfect, are more or less accomplished and secured.

I shall proceed, in the remainder of this lecture, to mention some particulars which may serve to illustrate the remarks I have now made on the necessity of executive government; drawing them from the American historians themselves, Ramsay and Marshall, more especially Marshall, who, though supposed to lean to the Federalists, is one of the most respectable of men, and, at all events, a sort of representative of Washington.

An English reader, when he comes to the history of the American war, as given by the American writers, hears of nothing at first but fury and resistance to the British ministers, resolutions to defend the liberties of America, public meetings, patriotic sacrifices and exertions of every description; and yet when Congress is assembled, an army collecting, and a general appointed, this Congress, army, and general, these defenders of their country and representatives of the public will, meet with nothing but difficulties and distresses; no supplies for the troops, no pay for the soldiers and officers, the paper money issued for the purpose intolerably depreciated, and at last even a mutiny among the troops, and this repeated at different periods of the contest.

But whence could arise all these difficulties? Why did not the Congress lay at once the necessary taxes on the people of America, and with the produce of these taxes procure the necessary supplies? — or if they issued paper money, why not with the same produce of the taxes keep their paper from being depreciated?

The fact was, that the Congress had it not in their power to tax America, and they had no real securities within their reach on which to rest their paper. The different governments of the different provinces of America were all separate and independent of each other; they were all, in truth, separate and independent republics. Congress was only a delegation from each province or republic, and was assembled merely for the purpose of considering the situation, of representing the claims, and at last of conducting the resistance of the whole continent. But no powers were given to the Congress of taxation; the utmost they could do was to recommend it to the separate provincial legislatures to levy taxes; they could not levy any taxes themselves; and so preposterous was the jealousy in the mind of the Americans of all power, that many years elapsed before any authority existed that could legally act for the whole continent. Thus the first thing that reason required to be done was the last thing that could be admitted; no proper executive power could be suffered to exist, and the fortunes of the contest, and indeed of America after the contest, were put to the most extreme hazard from this very circumstance; and it is this unreasonableness, and this consequent hazard, that become the very lesson which I would now impress upon your minds; for all arose from the want of an executive government.

The Congress were in possession of no revenue, and had no resource but to emit paper money, which was to depend for its payment on the public faith, — on the contributions of the different provinces for the liquidation or security of the debt *after* the termination of the dispute. This dispute lasted much longer than was ever expected; new and repeated issues of paper money were resorted to; that the paper, therefore, should after a certain time depreciate rapidly, and at length become scarcely negotiable at any discount, can be matter of no surprise. Washington was in the mean time necessitated to get his supplies from the legislatures of the different provinces in any manner he could. Great exertions were no doubt made; but the anxieties, the mortifications, the apprehensions he suffered are visible in every page of his letters. So early as 1777, he was obliged even to take by force what he could not regularly get possession of; at another period to try the experiment of receiving in kind and in bulk what he had no proper government money to purchase: neither of these expedients could possibly answer. In the mean time the sufferings and privations of the soldiers and officers, even so early as the winters of 1777 and 1778, were most extreme; famine was more than once in the camp; and such exertions and privations must have been fatal to the cause, if the cause had not appeared to the sufferers a struggle for every thing that could be dear to themselves or their posterity.

At no period was this distress of the army urged to a higher point of exasperation than at the time when success on the part of Great



Britain seemed no longer possible. In 1780, a captain's pay did not, from the depreciation of paper, furnish him with shoes. It was only at a period so late as 1780 that some relief could be obtained from France by Franklin, and it was not till 1781 that a more regular and effective loan was at last negotiated at Versailles; and you will be led to suppose, if you read the history, that nothing but this last most opportune supply could have saved the American army from destruction. Great dependence was placed by the ministers and people of Great Britain on the effects that must be produced from this depreciation of the paper money. At a subsequent period in our late revolutionary war, great dependence was placed in like manner on the fall of *assignats* in France. In each case the expectations of our English cabinets were disappointed. I will digress for a moment on this particular point, on account of its importance.

In all such cases the principle upon which the whole depends seems to be this, — whether there is in the country any executive government sufficiently strong to convert the produce of the land and labor of the community to the purposes of the army. Paper money is a species of tax, and a most unfair one, if it depreciates; for any man who touches it loses by it. The question, then, is, whether, if it should depreciate materially and at last fail, the popular leaders can venture upon more violent expedients, can seize and convert to the purposes of the troops whatever is wanted; which is, in other words, a question of the strength of the executive government at the time. The expectations, therefore, of the English cabinets were, I apprehend, much more reasonable in the case of America than in the case of France.

In the latter (in France), the executive government soon became so strong, that life, property, and every thing human was seized upon and disposed of without the slightest ceremony or mercy. France, too, was a part of a continent, not itself a continent. The revolutionary leaders had it, therefore, always in their power to quarter their armies on the countries of their enemies. There was little hope, therefore, from the fall of *assignats*. But in the case of America the executive government was evidently very weak. Far from being able to provide itself, if necessary, with whatever it wanted, it seemed not able to resort to the most common exercise of the powers of all acknowledged governments, the laying on of taxes. Their paper issues of money seemed to depend, not on any securities prepared for the purpose, but merely on the good pleasure and proper faith of the community; but this was a very frail foundation on which to rest the fortunes of a military contest with Great Britain.

In every case, I must repeat (for I must repeat my principle), where taxes cannot be laid, or some expedient resorted to of the same nature and effect with taxes, it certainly does not seem possible to carry on any system of resistance against invading armies. It is in

vain to say that the food and clothing exist in the country, if the state cannot, by some mode of taxation, or seizure, or confiscation, get possession of them, and convert them to the use of the soldier who wants them. Certainly the pages of the American historians, and the letters of Washington himself, show very plainly how extreme is the hazard, how cruel are the difficulties, to which every cause must be exposed, when the executive government is too weak, — when the leaders of the general emotion are not intrusted with proper powers to supply those who fight in the public cause with the proper means of fighting, with tents, with clothing, with ammunition, and food, — and when such men, in those ebblings of the spirit and fluctuations of the resolution, to which all men must be exposed who have been highly wrought up by their feelings, when such men have to compare their own forlorn, desolate, helpless, and unworthy situation with all the pride and pomp and circumstance which may in the mean time belong to the armies of their enemy. I need not allude further to the letters of Washington, to make out to you the extent and intolerable nature of these privations and difficulties. The truth is, that a considerable portion of the very extraordinary merit of Washington, as I have before stated, depends on this very point; and how he could keep his officers and his men in any tolerable state of good-humor, or spirits, or discipline, amid the privations and wretchedness they had to suffer, in such a climate as that of America, — how he could maintain even the appearance of an army before an army so accommodated and appointed as was that of England, must appear perfectly inexplicable to those who consider what the human mind is, and what the circumstances were by which not only the courage of the American soldier, but qualities of the mind and temper far more rare than courage, and of more difficult attainment, were tried to the utmost, day after day, and year after year.

Famine, as I have already mentioned, was more than once in the camp. Washington saw his best officers throwing up their commissions; troops that could not be tempted by the enemy to desert were yet in a state of mutiny; all were suffering and all were complaining. If they met the enemy in the field, they were for a long period necessarily beaten; if they kept behind their intrenchments, they had no comfort or support but the looks of their general, and their consciousness of the high principles of liberty which ennobled their cause. They must, in the mean time, have supposed the Congress totally inattentive to their distresses, totally regardless of those brave men for whose wants it was their proper duty to provide. The real difficulties of the case, the real impossibilities which their legislators were expected to accomplish, were not of a nature to be readily explained to their understandings, even if their minds had been in a state of tranquillity, much less when the result of the explanation was to show them that they were necessarily to be left in a state of nakedness and hunger.



But all these difficulties arose, in the instance before us, from the want of a proper executive power in the state ; for this is the lesson to which I must now return, and which you must not forget. There was no executive government to levy general taxes and convert the produce of the taxes to the proper purpose ; nor was there any executive government to seize, as in France, on every thing that was wanted, nor any neighbouring nations on which the armies could be quartered.

But this want of a proper executive government was to be exhibited in a still more striking manner than has yet been alluded to. Those meritorious and gallant men who successfully resisted the British armies were not only paid in a constantly depreciating paper while the war lasted, but they were never, even in the event, and *after* the war had ceased, properly paid their arrears ; and the reader has to take up and lay down the subject of these arrears again and again, as he reads the history of Marshall, to peruse the expostulations of Washington to Congress, and then ultimately to see the army break up and dissolve, and the general retire to his farm, — to see the poor soldier, impatient to revisit his family and friends, dismissed on his furlough with only some slight portion of his arrears, dismissed never after to return to a state where he could demand his right ; the reader is to witness all this till his feelings are wound up to such a pitch of indignation that he is ready to execrate and devote to eternal abomination all the legislators and legislative assemblies, the whole country and continent together, where such base, selfish, faithless ingratitude could be endured for a moment. It is, however, to be supposed, that no such disgrace to the American name could have sullied the annals of the Revolution, if there had existed at the time a proper executive power in the general government, or if it had ever existed afterwards, at any point of time sufficiently near the termination of the war. This is a sort of lesson which, in that abhorrence of all arbitrary rule which I trust will ever animate your bosoms, you must by no means forget.

The English documents which relate to this American civil war show the unfortunate nature of high principles of government. I have stated this part of the instruction to be derived from the dispute already ; but from the American documents the conclusion is the very reverse. I am now, therefore, stating this, as before I did the other, and you will draw, I hope, the instruction that is afforded by both.

I could wish that this subject of the paper money of America, and the revolutionary debt, should hereafter occupy your reflection ; you will find materials in Ramsay and Marshall. Ramsay gives an appendix on paper money expressly ; but the subject is huddled up too rapidly at the end ; and the historian, though he resumes it in his History, never does, and from the *date* of his work never could, give the

entire detail of it, in a complete and satisfactory manner. Marshall is more full, but he never properly connects and puts it at once regularly and thoroughly in the possession of the reader. He has a sort of stately, tedious manner, which keeps the mind for a long time in a disagreeable state of suspense, from which it is at the last scarcely ever relieved. I suspect that both writers were not a little ashamed of the facts that lay before them.

I consider these points as on the whole so curious, and so fitted to employ your thoughts, that I shall dwell a little longer upon them; giving you my facts, as nearly as I can, in the very words, first of Ramsay, and afterwards of Marshall.

The resolution of the Congress to raise an army, in June, 1775, was followed by another to emit bills of credit: for their *redemption* they pledged the *confederated* colonies. More bills were issued in November, 1775, all on a supposition that an accommodation would take place before the 10th of June, 1776. It was thought, however, necessary, in consequence of the contract entered into by Great Britain with Germany for sixteen thousand foreign mercenaries, to extend the plan of defence, and in February, May, and July, 1776, more and more bills were emitted; so that the *first* issue swelled from two to twenty millions of dollars. The paper money circulated for about eighteen months, and to the extent of twenty millions, without depreciation.

Congress made some efforts to borrow, and some to *recommenda* taxes to the different States of the Union. But, from the impossibility of procuring a sufficiency of money, either from loans or taxes, the old expedient of further emissions was reiterated; and the value decreased as the quantity increased.

The depreciation began at different periods in different States, but became general about the middle of the year 1777, and progressively increased for three or four years. In 1777, the depreciation reached two or three for one; in 1778, five or six for one; in 1779, twenty-seven or twenty-eight for one; in 1780, fifty or sixty for one, during the first four or five months; afterwards, one hundred and fifty for one, and the circulation only partial; in 1781, several hundreds for one, and many would not take the paper at any rate. It is to be observed all this time, that the paper emissions of the different States, not only of Congress, but of the different provincial States, amounted also to many millions, and, being mixed with the continental money of Congress, added to its depreciation.

Washington was, after about five years, reduced to the alternative of disbanding his troops, or of supplying them with necessaries by military force.

Now I must here remark, though Dr. Ramsay does not, that after five years the success of the Revolution was become *certain*. Had it been *still doubtful*, what, in such a situation, would have been the fate either of the army or the Congress? But to proceed.



The next expedient was to call upon the States, in lieu of money, for determinate quantities of flour and other articles, for the use of the army. This was a tax in *kind*, and found on experiment so inconvenient, partial, and expensive, that it was speedily abandoned.

The remaining expedient was to call in the old paper by taxes, to burn it, and then to emit new paper, one of new for twenty of old, under new conditions. But the provincial States could not be brought to consent to this with sufficient unanimity, nor, indeed, would they have assented to any financial measure of a general nature that could have been proposed; and on this account, it appears, that, for want of some federal head, or executive power, to force the country to submit to the proper rules of equity and reason, and even to the measures necessary for the accomplishment of their own wishes, the success of their own resistance to Great Britain, a crisis followed (so late as the year 1781) which might have been fatal to the cause of the Revolution, if relief had not been obtained by the means of France. There was no circulating medium either of paper or specie in the neighbourhood of the American army, a real want of necessaries ensued.\* The Pennsylvanian line could not, and would not, endure their situation, without pay and without provisions. They were in a state of mutiny. Yet these men had not ceased to be patriots, though they could not stand at their posts till they died off by famine. Sir Henry Clinton tried every expedient to bring them over to the British army, but in vain. Washington and the Congress, luckily for America, being more considerate than generals and legislators on such occasions commonly are, adopted mild measures; the army was not dissolved, and the revolt was quieted. But what might at length have been the event it is impossible to say. Fortunately, new resources had been opened about the time of this crisis, so long wished for by the enemies and dreaded by the friends of American independence. A great deal of gold and silver was at this time introduced into the American States, by a trade with the French and Spanish West India islands, and again by the French army in Rhode Island. The king of France furnished a subsidy of six millions of livres, and was the security for ten millions more borrowed in the Netherlands. The public finances were put under the skilful direction of Mr. Morris, and the public engagements were made payable in gold and silver.

About this time the old continental paper money ceased to have any currency; the money had got out of the hands of the original proprietors, and was in the possession of others, who had obtained it, it may be supposed, at some very high rate of depreciation. To raise taxes to pay this paper money, at its original value, and thus to pre-

\* Ramsay's language is,—"At this period of the war, there was little or no circulating medium, either in the form of paper or specie, and in the neighbourhood of the American army there was a real want of necessary provisions." *History of the American Revolution*, Vol. ii. p. 223. — N.

serve the public faith, was now quite out of the question; and the extinction of it seems to have produced no particular sensation: the ill effects produced by the depreciation of this paper money had taken place before. To prevent or retard this depreciation, Congress had made different efforts from time to time; they had recommended to the States absurd and unjust laws for regulating the prices of labor, manufactures, and all sorts of commodities; for confiscating and selling the estates of Tories; and they very early recommended a law for making the paper money a legal tender. These laws were all found, of course, to be impracticable; all but the last, of legal tender, which produced, not indeed the effect intended, but that alone which it is fitted to produce: it enabled a man who had borrowed a pound to pay his debt by paper which, though nominally a pound, was not really worth a pound, nor one half, nor one eighth of the money: that is, it enabled every existing debtor to cheat his creditor; and those who had to receive annuities, who had money out at interest, widows and orphans, for instance; or the aged who had retired from business, found themselves reduced to beggary: that is, the very persons who should, of all others, be under the protection of the state, the innocent and the defenceless, were ruined by it; and such are always the only effects that can be produced by this measure of a legal tender; existing debtors are enabled to cheat existing creditors, — nothing more.

The concluding paragraphs of the American historian are remarkable, and should be a warning to those who tamper with the circulating medium of a country. "The evils of depreciation," says he, "did not terminate with the war; they extend to the present hour. . . . . The iniquity of the laws estranged the minds of many of the citizens from the habits and love of justice. The nature of obligations was so far changed, that *he* was reckoned the honest man, who, from principle, delayed to pay his debts. . . . . Truth, honor, and justice were swept away by the overflowing deluge of legal iniquity. . . . . Time and industry have already, in a great degree, repaired the losses of *property* which the citizens sustained during the war; but both have hitherto failed in effacing the taint which was then communicated to their *principles*; nor can its total ablution be expected, till a new generation arises, unpractised in the iniquities of their fathers."

I have been quoting from Ramsay. I will now lay before you a few sentences from Paine's Letter to the Abbé Raynal, published in Philadelphia, in the year 1782. I do so, to show you how necessary it is that you should study well the elements of political economy, before you approach any subject connected with the national prosperity; you will otherwise be always liable to be deceived by mistaken writers or speakers, who produce with confidence the first impressions of the mind on these subjects of political economy, which first impressions



are, in this particular science, almost always wrong. Paine is a writer as distinguished for the superficial view which he takes of the subjects on which he writes, as for the effrontery with which he proposes and the ability with which he illustrates his opinions. Indeed, I know no argument so strong against all the democracy which he espouses, as the very success of his own works. I should hope, after what I have read to you from Ramsay, and the unhappy consequences that you see from his account result to helpless, unoffending individuals from a depreciated currency, that you are not now to be imposed upon by the loose, though specious, reasonings of Paine. You will, I hope, detect their unfairness and inaccuracy, while I read them. I do not deny that they are plausible; this is rather the reason why I now produce them, that on this subject you may always be particularly circumspect and patient.

"I know," says Paine, "it must be extremely difficult to make foreigners understand the nature and circumstances of our paper money, because there are natives who do not understand it themselves. But with us, its fate is now determined; common consent has consigned it to rest, with that kind of regard which the long service of inanimate things insensibly obtains from mankind. Every stone in the bridge that has carried us over seems to have a claim upon our esteem; but this was a corner-stone, and its usefulness cannot be forgotten. . . . .

"The paper money, though issued from Congress under the name of dollars, did not come from that body always at that value. Those which were issued the first year were equal to gold and silver; the second year, less; the third, still less; and so on, for nearly the space of five years; at the end of which, I imagine that the whole value at which Congress might pay away the several emissions, taking them together, was about ten or twelve million pounds sterling. Now, as it would have taken ten or twelve millions sterling of taxes to carry on the war for five years, and as while this money was issuing, and likewise depreciating down to nothing, there were none or few valuable taxes paid, consequently the event to the public was the same, whether they sunk ten or twelve millions of expended money by depreciation, or paid ten or twelve millions by taxation; for, as they did not do both, and chose to do one, the matter, in a general view, was indifferent. And therefore what the Abbé supposes," says Paine, "to be a debt has now no existence, it having been paid by everybody consenting to reduce, at his own expense, from the value of the bills continually passing among themselves, a sum equal to nearly what the expense of the war was for five years. . . . .

"It is true," he goes on to say, "that it never was intended, neither was it foreseen, that the debt contained in the paper currency should sink itself in this manner; but as, by the voluntary conduct of all and of every one, it has arrived at this fate, the debt is paid by those who owed it. Perhaps nothing was ever so universally the act

of a country as this. Government had no hand in it. Every man depreciated his own money by his own consent; for such was the effect which the raising the nominal value of goods produced. But as by such reduction he sustained a loss equal to what he must have paid to sink it by taxation, therefore the line of justice is to consider his loss by the depreciation as his tax for that time, and not to tax him, when the war is over, to make that money good in any other person's hands, which became nothing in his own."

But the miserable effects of the want of an executive government sufficiently strong were not here to cease, not to cease with the wrongs of the national creditor. The discontents of the soldiers and officers, which had in 1781 nearly threatened the ruin of the army of America, threatened, two years afterwards, the very ruin of its freedom. On the approach of peace, in 1783, Congress, it was feared, possessed neither the power nor the inclination to comply with its engagements; and the prospect was very melancholy to those brave men who had wasted their fortunes and the prime of their life in unrewarded services. In Congress, the business of the army, it was found, advanced slowly when intelligence of peace had arrived. The army were, as may be supposed, soured by their past sufferings, their present wants, and their gloomy prospects, exasperated by neglect, and indignant at the injustice shown them; and in this sullen and ominous state of things, they were addressed by an anonymous writer, probably some brother soldier who felt his situation, unworthy as it certainly was, more strongly than the situation of his country, perilous as it immediately must be, if its legislature was to be addressed by exasperated men with arms in their hands, at the close of the Revolution. But the writer, whoever he was, could produce on this occasion the "thoughts that breathe and words that burn."

"Yes, my friends," said he, "that suffering courage of yours was active once; it has conducted the United States of America through a doubtful and bloody war; it has placed her in the chair of independency, and peace returns again to bless — whom? A country willing to redress your wrongs, cherish your worth, and reward your services? A country courting your return to private life, with tears of gratitude and smiles of admiration, — longing to divide with you that independency which your gallantry has given, and those riches which your wounds have preserved? Is this the case? Or is it rather a country that tramples upon your rights, disdains your cries, and insults your distresses? Have you not more than once suggested your wishes and made known your wants to Congress, — wants and wishes which gratitude and policy should have anticipated, rather than evaded? And have you not lately, in the meek language of entreating memorials, begged from their justice what you could no longer expect from their favor? How have you been answered? Let the letter which you are called to consider to-morrow make reply. If this,



then, be your treatment while the swords you wear are necessary for the defence of America, what have you to expect from peace, when your voice shall sink and your strength dissipate by division, — when those very swords, the instruments and companions of your glory, shall be taken from your sides, and no remaining mark of military distinction left but your wants, infirmities, and scars? Can you, then, consent to be the only sufferers by this revolution, and, retiring from the field, grow old in poverty, wretchedness, and contempt? Can you consent to wade through the vile mire of dependency, and owe the miserable remnant of that life to charity, which has hitherto been spent in honor? If you can, go, and carry with you the jest of Tories and the scorn of Whigs, — the ridicule, and what is worse, the pity of the world! Go, starve, and be forgotten!”

Fortunately, the commander-in-chief, Washington, was in camp, and contrived to pacify the brave companions of his glory, even while he must have been conscious that every word of complaint was just, and while every sentence in this anonymous address must have been a dagger to his own upright heart. He entreated them not to take any measures which, viewed in the calm light of reason, would lessen the dignity and sully the glory they had hitherto maintained. “Let me request you,” he said, “to rely on the plighted faith of your country, and place a full confidence in the purity of the intentions of Congress; that, previous to your dissolution as an army, they will cause all your accounts to be fairly liquidated, as directed in their resolutions which were published to you two days ago; and that they will adopt the most effectual measures in their power to render ample justice to you for your faithful and meritorious services. And let me conjure you, in the name of our common country, as you value your own sacred honor, as you respect the rights of humanity, and as you regard the military and national character of America, to express your utmost horror and detestation of the man who wishes, under any specious pretences, to overturn the liberties of our country, and who wickedly attempts to open the flood-gates of civil discord and deluge our rising empire in blood.”

The officers that had been convened, moved by the entreaties and expostulations of their justly beloved and revered commander, resolved unanimously, “that the army continued to have an unshaken confidence in the justice of Congress and their country, and were fully convinced that the representatives of America would not disband or disperse the army until their accounts were liquidated, the balances accurately ascertained, and adequate funds established for payment.”

But the representatives of America, from their inability to manage the different State legislatures of the continent, or to get permanent funds placed within their disposal, did disband and disperse the army before the accounts were liquidated, before their balances were ascertained, or adequate funds established for their payment; that is, the

people of America, for want of an executive power to control their own discordant opinions, jarring interests, and selfish passions, were just as insensible as could have been the most unprincipled tyrants and despots of the earth to the proper feelings of humanity and the most sacred obligations of public faith.

It was in vain that Congress addressed the different States of the American Union. "These debts are to be paid," they said, "in the first place, to an ally, who to the exertion of his arms in support of our cause has added the succours of his treasure, and who to his important loans has added liberal donations [the king of France]; in the next place, to individuals in a foreign country, who were the first to give so precious a token of their confidence in our justice. Another class of creditors is that illustrious and patriotic band of fellow-citizens whose blood and whose bravery have defended the liberties of their country; who have patiently borne, among other distresses, the privation of their stipends, whilst the distresses of their country disabled it from bestowing them; and who even now ask for no more than such a portion of their dues as will enable them to retire from the field of victory and glory into the bosom of peace and private citizenship, and for such effectual security for the residue of their claims as their country is now unquestionably able to provide. The remaining class of creditors is composed partly of such of our fellow-citizens as originally lent to the public the use of their funds, or have since manifested most confidence in their country by receiving transfers from the lenders, and partly of those whose property has been either advanced or assumed for the public service."

This address was followed by a very able and affecting letter from Washington; but all in vain. This was in June, 1783. Neither the recommendations of Congress, nor the counsels and entreaties of this parent, this protecting genius of his country, received, it seems, from the provincial legislatures, the consideration which the public exigence demanded, nor did they meet, as it was called, "that universal assent which was necessary to give them effect."

The subject was again taken up in 1786. The revenue system of 1783 was again solemnly recommended by Congress to the several States, and they were implored to avoid the fatal evils which must flow from a violation of those principles of justice which it was told them, and truly told them, were the only solid basis of the honor and prosperity of nations. They were implored in vain; and Washington had been obliged, in a letter to a friend, to confess that America was descending from the high ground on which she stood into the vale of confusion and darkness.

At length a new government, the federal government, was formed at the close of the year 1789,\* to act for the whole continent; to con-

\* It can hardly be necessary to remind the American reader that the Constitution of the United States went into operation on the 4th of March, 1789. The statement



trol, on particular occasions and for general purposes, the different provincial legislatures. And when this government was once formed (a proper image of executive power), resolutions were carried, though still with the greatest difficulty, for the funding of the public debt; that is, for providing proper payment for all the creditors of the state, military and civil, foreign and domestic.

The discussions that took place on the subject, as given by Marshall, are remarkable. To endeavour to understand them and reflect upon them would be a very useful exercise to any one who hopes hereafter to interfere, with advantage to his country, either in the criticism or the conduct of public affairs. To this discussion I can only in this manner allude. I could have wished to enter into it, and give you some general idea of the difficulties with which the more wise part of the American legislators had to struggle; but I have occupied you very long with the general subject already, — indeed, too long, as it will be thought by those who do not consider how important in the concerns of mankind are the questions which have been more or less connected with the observations I have been making: how far the depreciation of the paper currency may be fatal to a national cause, when maintained against a foreign or domestic oppressor; the nature of paper money; the obligations of public faith, public gratitude, national honour; how far communities may be trusted with the government of themselves; the necessity of a strong executive power, lodged somewhere or other, in every form of government that is to exhibit any proper adherence to the principles of reason, justice, and national faith, — in every form of government that is to advance the prosperity, secure the interests, or even protect the freedom of any civilized society among mankind.

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## LECTURE XXXVI.

### AMERICAN WAR.

I SHALL now proceed to lay before you other particulars which I think may serve to illustrate the subject to which I adverted in my last lecture, the necessity of executive government. I do so because I conceive this to be the great point of instruction that is offered by

in the text seems to have reference to the complete organization of the new government during the first session of Congress, which terminated Sept. 29, 1789. Marshall's Washington, Vol. v. p. 222. — N.

the history of America, after the first lessons have been given, — those that are of a very opposite nature, — those which I have proposed to you in former lectures: the injustice, I mean, and inexpediency of government too authoritative, of rule too arbitrary, such as Great Britain certainly was guilty of attempting to enforce upon her colonies in the beginning of this memorable contest.

Congress was at first only a committee, as I have already noted, — an assembly of men delegated from the different States of the American Union. They could only *recommend* whatever measures they thought expedient; they could *enforce* none.

For some time these recommendations were received as laws; but at length you will see, as you read the history (you will have collected even from the notices I have been able already to afford you), how miserable were the effects produced by the want of all proper executive power in the government.

At last a sort of confederation was agreed upon, and the Congress was avowedly considered as the head of the whole Union, acting for and representing all the different States of the continent. This confederation may be called the second stage of the revolutionary government of America.

But still no proper executive power was given even to this confederation, and nothing could be more unfavorable to the best interests of the country than to leave the confederated government so weak in executive power, and, in fact, thus to set up an assembly to act the part of a government, and leave it in the mean time at the mercy of thirteen other distinct sovereigns, each exercising the real powers of government in different provinces of the same country. Yet such was the fact, and for some years continued to be the fact, in a manner that really exercises not a little the patience and good-humor of any one who sits at a distance and reads the history of these events.

To any such person, this celebrated question of the federal government, that is, the question whether there should be a general government for the whole continent, appears, I had almost ventured to say, no question at all; however, it must have agitated America at the time, and continued to agitate America long after. To suffer thirteen republics to arise, to quarrel among each other, to destroy each other's interests, to be incapable of any connection with the rest of the world, rather than combine the whole, by some general government, into a great community that might in the progress of things become a mighty nation, is a proposition so monstrous and extravagant, that I know not how it is to be looked upon as any other than the most important specimen which the history of the world affords of the influence of local feelings, long established associations, and all those partial views and jealousies which in parishes, corporations, and public meetings we see so often occur, and which are always so justly the ridicule and scorn of every intelligent member of the community.



It must be supposed, indeed, out of that common respect which is always due to the opinions of others, that the principles of liberty were, somehow or other, considered as involved in the question: and this was certainly the case. The anti-federalists reasoned, for instance, each in their particular State, after the following manner: that the liberties of that State would be endangered by being committed to the guardianship of a general legislature, acting at a distance, and with no particular regard for its criticisms or complaints; that this general legislature must have a president, this president a senate, and that he must even have a court, executive officers, &c., &c.; that, in short, the continent of America would be exposed to all the calamities (such they thought them) of a king, an aristocracy, a regular army, as in the old governments of Europe.

But if such be their reasonings, as they certainly were, this I hold to be of itself a lesson for all those who love liberty, and who would extend its blessings to their country. Men are not to be pedants in liberty, any more than in virtue. Though they are not to be oppressed by tyrants, they must at least be governed by their fellow-men. The great principles of independence in the heart of man are to be cherished and upheld; but order, prosperity, the purposes of society, must be accomplished. The many must delegate the government of themselves to the few. Control, executive power, must be lodged somewhere; and the question is not, as the friends of liberty sometimes suppose, how the executive power can be made sufficiently weak, but only how it can be made sufficiently strong, and yet brought within the influence of the criticism of the community, — that is, in other words, how it can secure the people from themselves, and yet be rendered properly alive to feelings of sympathy and respect for them, and alive also to the obligations of justice and good faith, and to sentiments of honor. This, indeed, is a problem in the management of mankind not easily to be solved; but it is the real problem, the proper problem, to exercise the patriotism of wise and virtuous men; and such men are not, from the difficulty of it, to rush headlong into any extremes, either of authoritative, arbitrary government on the one hand, or mere democracy on the other.

It was so late almost as the year 1789, before the people of influence in America could be brought, even by all their experience of the evils of inefficient government, properly to interest themselves in what was to them the most important question of all others, — the formation of some general government for the whole continent. The confederation, it was seen, came not sufficiently within this description, — the confederation to which I have just alluded, and called the second stage of the revolutionary government of America.

The mind of Washington had evidently been long agitated upon the subject. It appears from his letters, that at one period he was in a state of considerable despair at the situation of his country; and it

was painful to him, he said, in the extreme, to be obliged to think, that, after the war had terminated so advantageously for America, wisdom and justice should be still wanting to its people, — that, after they had confederated as a nation, they should still be afraid to give their rulers sufficient powers to order and direct their affairs, — rulers placed in such very particular circumstances of transient, delegated, and responsible authority.

At length an effort was made, and this effort was ultimately successful. You will see the particulars in Marshall. But the difficulties that opposed themselves are very edifying. A few of these particulars are the following.

It happened in 1785, that the provinces of Virginia and Maryland had to form an agreement relative to their own commercial interests; and from the settlement of these, they proceeded to propose to all the States of America the consideration of their *joint* interests as a *commercial* nation. This at length ripened into a scheme for assembling a general convention to revise the articles of confederation, — in a word, to form some general government for the continent, to comprehend not only its commercial concerns, but every other concern.

A convention met at Annapolis, but it consisted only of delegates from five States.\* The result was a recommendation for another convention at Philadelphia in 1787. Now the question was, whether this convention would ever meet; if it did meet, whether the thirteen independent States, or republics, would forego the pleasure and privileges and pride of separate sovereignty, for the good of the continent, and their own good, properly understood. The probability was, that they would not. In the mean time, the mind of Washington, and of all wise and good men, was in a state of the utmost gloom and anxiety. It was evident that the recommendation for a convention to form a new government should have come from *Congress*, — from the confederated government already existing, — not from any particular State, like Virginia or Maryland; and the convention, if met, could not be considered as a legal meeting. But again, it was sufficiently evident, that, if some efficient government was not soon established, the licentiousness of the people would very soon terminate in perfect anarchy. Hot-headed, presumptuous, ignorant men were many of them, particularly the young, indisposed to all control whatever; and the critical situation of things was extremely increased by the number of persons who owed money, and who could see no hope or comfort for themselves, but in the absence of all the obligations of order and law.

At length commotions agitated all New England; and in Massa-

\* Virginia, Delaware, Pennsylvania, New Jersey, and New York. Marshall gives the number correctly in his text, but in a note, designating the States, he includes Maryland, making the number six. This is a mistake. See the Address of the Convention (Madison Papers, Vol. ii. p. 700). — N.



chusetts a positive insurrection against all government actually took place. Washington wrote to his friend, Colonel Humphreys, — "For God's sake tell me what is the cause of all these commotions? Do they proceed from licentiousness, British influence, or real grievances?" — "From all the *information* I have been able to obtain," said the colonel, "I should attribute them to all the three causes which you have suggested; but it rather appears to me that there is a licentious spirit prevailing among many of the people, a levelling principle, a desire of change, and a wish to annihilate all debts, public and private."

General Knox said, — "High taxes are the ostensible cause of the commotion, but not the real. The insurgents have never paid any, or but very little taxes. But they see the weakness of government. They feel at once their own poverty, compared with the opulent, and their own force; and they are determined to make use of the latter in order to remedy the former. Their creed is," — there is always one of some kind or other, — "that the property of the United States has been protected from confiscation by the joint exertions of all, and therefore ought to be common to all."

A majority of the people of Massachusetts was described by Colonel Lee, after the manner of General Knox, as in open opposition to the government. . "Some of the leaders avow," says he, "the subversion of it to be their object, together with the abolition of debts, the division of property, and a reunion with Great Britain. In all the Eastern States the same temper prevails more or less."

"The picture which you have exhibited," replied Washington, "and the accounts which are published, exhibit a melancholy verification of what our transatlantic foes have predicted; and of another thing, perhaps, which is still more to be regretted, and is yet more unaccountable, — that mankind, when left to themselves, are unfit for their own government. I am mortified beyond expression, I am lost in amazement, when I behold what intrigue, the interested views of desperate characters, ignorance and jealousy of the minor part, are capable of effecting as a scourge on the major part of our fellow-citizens of the Union; for it is hardly to be supposed that the great body of the people can be so shortsighted."

But in the midst of all the perturbations of the mind of Washington, the even tenor of its justice never forsook it; and even at this fearful moment, his letter gives a lesson to all the governments of the earth. "Know," says he, "precisely what the insurgents aim at. If they have *real* grievances, redress them, if possible, or acknowledge the justice of them, and your inability to do it in the present moment. If they have not, employ the force of government against them at once. If this is inadequate, all will be convinced that the superstructure is bad, or wants support. To be more exposed in the eyes of the world, and more contemptible, than we already are, is hardly

possible." Such were Washington's sentiments; and in the history you will see that it was found necessary to subdue the insurgents by force.

"But the most important effect of this unprovoked rebellion," says Marshall, "was the deep conviction it produced of the necessity of enlarging the powers of the general government, and the consequent direction of the public mind towards the convention" (I have just spoken of) "which was to assemble at Philadelphia." At last it was declared in *Congress* "to be expedient that a convention should be held to render the federal constitution adequate to the exigencies of government and the preservation of the union."

This recommendation, which legalized the original scheme, added to the consideration of the rebellion, inclined at length the States of New England to favor the measure; and at the time and place appointed, the representatives of twelve States assembled; — Rhode Island was the exception. Washington was elected president, and the doors were closed; — an important meeting for America. On the great principles which should constitute the basis of their system, not much contrariety of opinion is understood to have prevailed; but more than once there was reason to fear that all would be lost by the rising up of the body without effecting the object for which it was assembled. At length the high importance of the union prevailed over local interests; and in September, 1787, the constitution was presented to the consideration of the different States of the whole continent.

But neither the intrinsic merits of the scheme of government, nor the weight of character by which it was supported (Franklin, Washington, and others), gave assurance that it would be ultimately received. Many individuals, it seems, of influence and talents, were desirous of retaining the sovereignty of the States unimpaired, and reducing the union to an alliance between thirteen independent nations. Many thought that a real opposition of interests existed between these different parts of the continent. Many could identify themselves with their own State governments, but considered the government of the United States as in some respects *foreign*. Many thought that power must be abused, and were therefore persuaded, they said, that the cradle of the federal constitution would be the grave of republican liberty. Every faculty of the mind was strained on the subject of the proposed constitution, to procure its reception or rejection. To decide the interesting question, men of the best talents of the several States were assembled in their respective conventions. So balanced were the parties in some of them, that, even after the subject had been discussed for a considerable time, the fate of the constitution could scarcely be conjectured. In many instances, the majority in its favor was very small; in some, even of the adopting States, it is scarcely to be doubted, a majority of the people were in opposition; in all of them, the numerous amendments which were



proposed\* show that a dread of dismemberment, not an approbation of the system, had induced an acquiescence in it.

At length the conventions of nine, and subsequently of eleven, States assented to and ratified the constitution; and this most important question, on which it was so difficult to obtain unanimity, and which it was therefore so perilous to agitate, was thus at last settled in favor (as it must surely be thought) of America. Washington was unanimously elected President, and on the 30th of April, 1789, delivered his first speech to the Senate and House of Representatives.

I have given you this slight account of these important transactions to induce you to consider them yourselves; and I have expressed myself in the words of Marshall, shortening and selecting different sentences from his work, that I might not mislead you by any words of my own on subjects so delicate.

No doubt, the impression on my mind has been the critical state of America during this interregnum between the peace in November, 1783, and April, 1789, — the perilous nature of such discussions, and, as I have so repeatedly observed, the paramount necessity of a strong executive government to be lodged somewhere or other.

It may be observed, that I draw my representations from Marshall, who was a friend to Washington, and, like him, a Federalist: I do so. But not to mention that there is no greater authority than the opinion of Washington, on any and on every occasion, I must confess it appears to me sufficient that there should have been at the time an Antifederalist party at all. Nothing more can be necessary to show the incurable nature of human dissent; the critical nature of discussions of government; the doubtful contest which general principles must always have to maintain with local politics: and all this goes to prove the total necessity of that very executive power, to escape from the dangers of which must have been the real aim of all the virtuous part of the Antifederalists.

While the new constitution was offered to the acceptance of the different States of America, a book was published under the title of *The Federalist*. A few numbers were written by Mr. Jay, a few more by Mr. Madison, three by Mr. Madison and Mr. Hamilton, and the rest by Mr. Hamilton.† These papers contain a very calm and

\* Amendments were proposed in only seven States, including two (North Carolina and Rhode Island) which did not accede to the new frame of government until after it had been some time in operation; in the other six, Delaware, Pennsylvania, New Jersey, Georgia, Connecticut, and Maryland, the Constitution was adopted unconditionally. See *Journal of the Convention which formed the Constitution* (Boston, 1819), Supplement, pp. 391 – 462. — N.

† According to Gideon's edition of the *Federalist*, first published in 1818, which is understood to have been issued under the auspices of Mr. Madison, and is now generally received as the standard edition, five numbers, viz. 2 to 5, inclusive, and 64, were written by Mr. Jay; twenty-nine, viz. 10, 14, 18 – 20, 37 – 58, 62, and 63, by Mr. Madison; and the remaining fifty-one, viz. 1, 6 – 9, 11 – 13, 15 – 17, 21 – 36, 59 – 61, 65 – 83, by Mr. Hamilton. — N.

enlightened discussion of all the material provisions of the new constitution, and the objections that had been urged against them; and the work, being one of great merit, and highly creditable to the statesmen by whom it was drawn up, is, of course, represented by an American writer, Mr. Bristed, as the concentration of all political wisdom, ancient and modern. "In depth and extent of political wisdom, &c., &c., it has no superior in all the world," &c., &c.\* It certainly may be read, even now, by an English statesman with great advantage: such discussions as are alone interesting to America he will easily distinguish from the rest, and may pass by; but most of them bear upon corresponding points in the British constitution, and cannot therefore be otherwise than instructive. The great value, however, of these chapters seems to be the lesson they afford to all who are to engage in the concerns of mankind; for they show that differences in opinion, of the most unexpected nature, must inevitably arise among them; they show the paramount necessity, above every other virtue, of the virtue of *patience*, to those who would enlighten mankind, or teach them to pursue their own interests. The reader

\* The Resources of the United States of America; or, a View of the Agricultural, Commercial, Manufacturing, Financial, Political, Literary, Moral, and Religious Capacity and Character of the American People. By John Bristed, Counsellor at Law, Author of the Resources of the British Empire. New York: 1818. — pp. 156, 157.

The *critique* on the Federalist contained in the work here cited is very inadequately represented by the few words produced in the text. It is but just, therefore, both to author and reader, to give the passage in full.

"In depth and extent of political wisdom, in the philosophy of jurisprudence, in comprehension and elevation of national views, in high and blameless honor, in profound and luminous ratiocination, in nervous and manly eloquence, in lofty and incorruptible patriotism, the American Federalist has no superior, and very few equals, in all the volumes of political economy, containing the lucubrations of the greatest sages and statesmen of modern Europe, whether of England, France, Germany, Italy, Spain, or Holland."

In assuming that the writer of this *beau morceau* was "of course" an American, Professor Smyth does injustice to his own country. From an autobiographical Introduction to a work published by Mr. Bristed in 1822, entitled "Thoughts on the Anglican and American-Anglo Churches," it appears that he was by birth and education an Englishman; that the credit of his rhetorical culture is due to "St. Mary's College, Winton," — "facility of composition" being an important part of the training at this institution; that his extensive acquaintance with "the lucubrations in political economy of the sages and statesmen of England, France, Germany, Italy, Spain, and Holland" commenced at the University of Edinburgh, "in the intervals of attendance on the medical lectures and visiting the Infirmary," — his "two years of residence in that distinguished school of instruction" affording him leisure to engage besides in the study of Greek poetry, metaphysics, Voltaire, Rousseau, Helvetius, and other writers of this school, French, English, and American; and that his erudition in "the philosophy of jurisprudence" was the fruit of a "cultivation of the" kindred "science of special pleading" in the Inner Temple, where he completed his professional education. On being called to the English bar, conceiving that the United States "opened an inexhaustible region for the development of talents," he took a voyage "to see this new *Atalantis*," and after "a few years of sojourning in this multitudinous democracy," published the results of his observation in the comprehensive work from which Professor Smyth quotes. Thoughts, &c., by John Bristed, (New York, 1822,) pp. 1-43. See also London Quarterly Review, Vol. xxi. pp. 16, 17, 18, 24; North American Review, Vol. xi. p. 200; Watt's Bibliotheca Britannica, (Edinburgh, 1824,) Vol. i. 152 d. — N.



will see in these numbers of the Federalist, that the authors of them have found it advisable to exhibit and combat political mistakes, and even political absurdities; to anatomize them, and pursue them through all their consequences, to a degree and to an extent that could not, *a priori*, have been thought for a moment necessary. And certainly it is continually suggested to the reader that a strong executive power must be lodged somewhere, to secure reasonable decisions upon questions of general import, and to protect the public from men of furious tempers, selfish views, and perverse understandings, such as must inevitably be found, and often with too great influence, in every community.

In the constitution that was at last accepted, and solemnly ratified and carried into execution, a few main points, all of the greatest importance, were happily secured. There were two houses of legislature, not one; the members of the Senate were chosen for six years, not two; and there was to be an executive magistrate chosen for four years; the federal system was in express articles established; and the President and the two houses were the legislature of the *continent*.

You are now to observe an illustration of what I have repeatedly laid down in the course of these lectures: that the lamentations of good men on the subject of party are vain; that parties are inseparable from every free government; and you must either have parties with all their good and bad effects, or no freedom of thought or speech, as in Turkey, or any other state where parties are not to be found.

In America, for instance, as you have already learned, a real difference of opinion existed, — the Federalist and the Antifederalist. And this difference was not, I apprehend, of a merely economical nature: whether the continent of America would rise faster in commercial and agricultural prosperity by being divided into thirteen different sovereignties, or by being combined into one. The difference did not, and could not, terminate here; it was of a more general and radical nature, and arose from different views in the science of politics. The Antifederalists were, and always have remained, men of sentiments more violently republican than the Federalists, — men who thought mankind might be managed by less of executive authority than the Federalists did; and this difference of opinion does and always must exist, not only in the American, but in every other free form of government; though in America this difference, it must be confessed, is exhibited in a very striking manner, — it requiring a very strong passion indeed for democracy, to suppose that the federalist government of America is not, and has not always been, sufficiently republican.

Such, however, I believe to be a reasonable view of the case before us; and you will see the new constitution of America no soon-

er carried into execution than the two parties make their appearance in the houses of legislature. One of the first questions that came before them was that to which we have alluded at such length already in the last lecture, — the providing for the public debt of America.

No expedient was possible but that of funding. To fund, however, on the authority of the federal government, was to enlist, it was thought, on the side of the federal system, all those who were thus to receive what was due to them, and all others to whom they might ever sell or bequeathe their securities; it was impossible, therefore, that such a measure should not be resisted by the Antifederalists. They ought, indeed, to have waived their principles in this case, for otherwise it was impossible to maintain the most indispensable obligations of public gratitude and faith. The evils, however, of the funding system, and its undoubted influence in favor of arbitrary government, supplied them with ample materials of honest and even accurate argument, as far as it went, if it had been possible to provide for the public debt in any other way. So again, in a subsequent stage of the same question, when a portion of the funded debt was to be made permanent, and not to terminate, as the rest was, at the end of twenty-five years, all the former arguments recurred, and were urged with even more earnestness, and indeed weight, than before.

The debates were very animated and long. It will be very improving to you to read the account of them as given by Marshall, and to observe the manner in which this great question, so vital to every principle of American honor, and even honesty, was at length carried. It was carried, to say the truth, by a mere turn of local interest in one of the States, — a turn so unexpected, that it might become almost an occasion for laughter and entertainment to those philosophers (and such there are) who can find a topic of amusement in the very trifling and unworthy circumstances which sometimes influence the most momentous concerns of mankind.

*Πάντα γέλως, καὶ πάντα κόπυς, καὶ πάντα τὸ μηδέν.*

The history, in a few words, is this: — A very able report on the subject had been made by the Secretary of the Treasury, Colonel Hamilton. After a very animated discussion of several days, a resolution was carried, by a small majority, in favor of funding and paying the debt, according to his rational views, — that is, paying the interest, and gradually paying the principal. But soon after, North Carolina acceded to the constitution, and its delegates, on taking their seats, changed the strength of the parties; and the question was now *lost* by two voices. Observe now the turn. A bill was brought in for fixing the seat of government, and it was at last agreed that some place should be selected on the banks of the Potomac. The result



was not a very intelligible result, even when explained by Marshall ; — I cannot now stop to give you his explanation ; but the result was, that two members representing districts on the Potomac went over to the other side, and the resolution was now carried, as it had been lost, by two voices. It is probable these delegates thought the residence of the President and government of America in their province was of great consequence to its interests ; and that, if the question of the funded debt was not settled in the affirmative, there would ultimately be no President or American government to reside on the Potomac, or anywhere else.\*

\* To any one who may take the trouble to compare the substance of the three preceding paragraphs with the authority from which it purports to have been derived (Marshall's Life of Washington), nothing can appear more extraordinary and unaccountable than the total misconception which it exhibits with regard to the great question in controversy on the occasion here referred to. This question, deemed "so vital to every principle of American honor, and even honesty," and which, after various fortune and long suspense, "was at length carried by a mere turn of local interest in one of the States," was, — not, as Prof. Smyth seems to suppose, *whether Congress should provide for the public debt, in the only way, as he justly remarks, in which it was possible to provide for it, namely, by funding, — but whether the general government should assume, and incorporate with the proper debt of the Union, the debts which had been contracted during the Revolution by the individual States.* To the proposal to fund the national debt there was, in fact, but little opposition, — the necessity of some provision of this sort being very generally admitted ; and there was never the slightest ground for apprehension as to the ultimate success of the measure.

It was in the debate on the question of assuming the State debts and funding them in common with the national debt, and expressly in opposition to this measure, that the argument noticed in the text was adduced, — namely, that "to fund on the authority of the federal government was to enlist on the side of the federal system all those who were thus to receive what was due to them," &c. ; or, as Marshall more accurately states it, "that the general government would acquire an undue influence, and that the State governments would be annihilated by the measure" ; since "not only would all the influence of the public creditors be thrown into the scale of the former, but it would absorb all the powers of taxation, and leave to the latter only the shadow of a government." Thus applied, the pertinency of the argument becomes plain.

In the "subsequent stage of the same question," as it is termed, the proposition was not, as Prof. Smyth conceives, "to make a portion of the funded debt permanent, and to terminate the rest at the end of twenty-five years," — no such project was ever advanced in any quarter, — but simply to make the whole irredeemable, except at certain slow rates, or at the pleasure of government. In the debate on this occasion there was little of that "recurrence to former arguments" which the text supposes. The slight resistance made in the outset to the principle of *funding* had long since ceased, and it was never afterwards renewed ; the present discussion turned upon a point in its nature purely collateral and incidental, and so treated by the opposition, — *the policy of imposing restrictions on the right of redemption.*

The "history" in the concluding paragraph is defective and erroneous in several particulars. The proper history is briefly this : — On the 14th of January, 1790, the Secretary of the Treasury, Col. Hamilton, in conformity to a resolution of the House near the close of the previous session, presented a "Plan for the Support of the Public Credit," providing, among other measures, for the "assumption of the debts of the particular States by the Union, and a like provision for them as for those of the Union." After a very animated discussion of two or three weeks upon this point, a resolution in accordance with the Secretary's views was carried in Committee of the Whole, by a vote of 31 to 26 ; and subsequently, a series of resolutions covering the whole ground embraced in the Plan was reported to the House. During these proceedings, North Carolina, which was strongly opposed to the project of assumption, was without any representatives in Congress, having acceded to the Constitution only the previous November ; but shortly afterwards two members came in from that State, when, with their aid, and

What I have now said will afford you a specimen of the divisions to which the American houses of legislature, even while Washington was President, were necessarily exposed. But every important measure of government, as you will easily see, might very naturally call forth the operation of such fundamental principles of dissent as I have mentioned: the taxes that were to be laid, whether in the way of excise or not; a national bank, whether it was to be established or not (in this last instance, even the *competency* of the new legislature legally to form a new corporation was denied); and many others; a military establishment, for instance. Washington did not deny his assent to the bill for regulating this military establishment: but in his diary there was found a note to say, that he thought it inadequate to its purposes, as no doubt it was.

In March, 1791, terminated the first session of Congress\* under the new constitution.

The Federal party had prevailed at the first elections; and a majority of the members were steadfast friends to the new system. Had the legislative assemblies of the new government been uninfluenced, says Marshall, by the *previous* divisions of the country, the

in the absence of some and by a change of votes on the part of others who had previously supported it, the resolution respecting the State debts was recommitted by a majority of two, 29 to 27, and after renewed discussion was finally struck out by the same majority, on a full vote of 31 to 29. A bill embracing all the other essential features of the Secretary's Plan was then passed and sent to the Senate, where a provision similar in principle to that rejected by the House having been added, it was returned to this branch for concurrence. In the mean time, says Marshall, a bill establishing a temporary together with a permanent seat of government, the former in Philadelphia and the latter on the Potomac, having, after a long and severe contest, passed both houses, through a compact between the representatives of Pennsylvania and Delaware with the friends of the Potomac, two members from districts on this river were thereby conciliated and brought over to the support of the measure respecting the State debts; through this change of influence a majority in its favor was obtained in the House, and it was finally carried, not, as Prof. Smyth understands Marshall to imply, "by two voices," but, as the Journals of Congress show, by a vote of 34 to 28, or six majority.

The explanation of the circumstances by which this result was brought about, which Prof. Smyth thinks "not very intelligible," may be sufficiently plain to those who consider that compromises of the sort here indicated are no very uncommon phenomena in legislation on either side of the Atlantic. "It has ever been understood," says Marshall, "that these members were on principle in favor of the assumption as modified in the amendment made by the Senate; but they withheld their assent from it, when originally proposed in the House of Representatives, in the opinion that the increase of the national debt added to the necessity of giving to the departments of the national government a more central residence." "The seat of government will concentrate the public paper," said, in the course of debate, one of these members (Mr. Lee, from Virginia); "hence the necessity of a situation from whence all parts of the Union may be equally benefited." This object being now attained, through the compromise by which some members previously desirous of a different locality were induced to vote in favor of a central position, the result in regard to the State debts naturally followed.

See Marshall's *Life of Washington* (Philadelphia, 1807), Vol. v. pp. 234-270. Gales's *Debates and Proceedings in Congress*, Vols. i. and ii., 1789-1791 (Washington, 1834). *Journal of the House of Representatives*, 1st Congress, 2d Session, 1790 (Washington, 1826). *Gazette of the United States* for 1790. — N.

\* The first Congress, third and final session; the first session, as already noticed (p. 641), terminated Sept. 29, 1789. Marshall, Vol. v. pp. 222, 305. — N.



many delicate points which they were called upon to decide must have mingled some share of party spirit with their deliberations. But in the actual state of the public mind, it was impossible for men not to be much disposed to impute to each other designs unfriendly to the general happiness. As yet these imputations did not extend to the President: but divisions had found their way even into his cabinet. Differences had arisen between the Secretary of State, Jefferson, and Colonel Hamilton, the Secretary of the Treasury; all deduced, in fact, from the federal question. All opposition to the measures of government was, in the first place, levelled at Hamilton, and at the Northern members, who generally supported these measures. The national prosperity and the popularity of the government were in the mean time advancing. But in the State assemblies, especially in the *southern* divisions of the continent, serious evidences of dissatisfaction were exhibited, which showed the jealousy entertained by the local sovereignties of the powers exercised by the federal legislature.

But the President and the houses of the federal government or Congress met again in October, 1791, — part of the interval having been very properly employed by Washington in making a progress through the Southern States, which were always most adverse to the federal system. The effect of the President's appearance was favorable; but the hostility to the government was diminished rather than subdued.

When Congress met, questions still presented themselves that awakened and embittered all the real differences of opinion that existed between the Federalists and their opponents. The topics insisted upon by the latter may be easily conceived: that the public debt had been artificially produced, because the continent had adopted debts which were due only by the several States;\* that the banishment of coin would be completed by the issue of bank paper; that the funding and banking system afforded effectual means of corrupting the legislative bodies; that the ultimate object of all the system, and of its friends, was to change the present republican form of government into that of a monarchy, on the form of the English constitution; that the representatives of the people, on the federal system, would be removed at such a distance from their constituents, that they would form the most corrupt government on earth; that taxes and tax-gatherers had already made their appearance, and even an excise; that the salaries of public officers were too high; that the Presi-

\* The Secretary of the Treasury, in his Report on the Public Credit, in January, 1790, estimated the national debt at \$ 54,124,464; to this amount the assumption of the State debts added less than two fifths, — namely, \$ 21,500,000. There could have been no pretence, of course, in any quarter, that the public debt had been *produced* by the adoption of the State debts; nor does Marshall so represent the matter: his language is, — "It was alleged that . . . this *accumulation* of debt had been artificially produced by the assumption of what was due from the States." Life of Washington, Vol. v p. 346. — N

dent had levees, and Mrs. Washington evening parties; that the American people were thus to be accustomed to the pomp and manners of European courts.

I quote these passages from Marshall, that your observation may be drawn to this part of his work. A love for civil liberty is so respectable at all times, and when the friends of civil liberty in any country make mistakes, those mistakes are of such importance, and operate so unfavorably to this first of national blessings, that you cannot be too well prepared against the errors into which men may fall on subjects of this nature. You cannot be rendered too expert in detecting the fallacies of popular reasonings on such questions, — in seeing the manner in which *statements* may be exaggerated by feelings, honorable as well as base, — the manner in which principles the most noble may be insisted upon with a disregard to *particular* circumstances, till they become subversive of themselves.

The mistakes of those who are friendly to harsh government and arbitrary power are seldom of any fatal effect to their particular cause, for their measures are still only more or less arbitrary; no advantage can commonly be hence obtained against the general cause of arbitrary power. But it is not so with the friends of the liberties of mankind. Do they relax their principles or exertions? are they careless or inert? The ground they desert is instantly occupied by their opponents, and cannot afterwards be recovered. Do they urge their principles and exertions too far? are they too active and impassioned? Their measures lead to inconvenience or calamity, to some injurious disturbance of the political machine, and moderate men join the side of their opponents. Their injudicious attempts to advance the public good are reprobated, and they are themselves accused of factious selfishness, or ridiculed for enthusiasm and folly.

The cause of civil liberty has to depend, not only on the virtues, but on the wisdom, of mankind; arbitrary power, only on their necessities. The advocates for the one have always to prove, first, that their own intentions are pure, and, secondly, that their measures are calculated to advance the happiness of the community; the supporters of the other have only to show that they are securing its peace and order. And thus it happens, as I have so repeatedly intimated in the course of these lectures, that civil liberty is of all things the most perishable and delicate; arbitrary rule, on the contrary, the most hardy and indestructible.

I will encroach upon your time while I further endeavour to enforce such general reflections as I have already made on the nature of parties, by a further reference to the work of Marshall, and to the characters he gives of the two most important ministers of Washington's cabinet. These two characters may, perhaps, serve as general descriptions of the two great parties of America.

Mr. Secretary Hamilton had long served his country in the field,



and passed from the camp into the Congress, where he remained for some time after the peace had been established. In the first situation he had fully witnessed the danger to which the independence of his country was exposed from the imbecility of government; in the latter, he saw her reputation lost, and her best interests sacrificed, chiefly from the same cause. Having, therefore, long felt the mischiefs produced by the State sovereignties, he naturally supported the federal government. He had wished the executive power and the Senate more permanent, and still retained and openly avowed the opinion, that American liberty and happiness had much more to fear from the encroachments of the great States than from those of the general government. These opinions will become your own, if you should ever read the numbers of his work, the *Federalist*.

Mr. Secretary Jefferson, on the contrary, had retired from Congress before the depreciation of the currency had produced an entire dependence of the Congress on the local governments. He then filled the highest offices in one of those local governments (Virginia), and about the close of the war went to France, and was there on a diplomatic mission while the first clear symptoms were appearing, and the first steps were taking, of that revolution in France which so agitated the minds of all reflecting men. In common with all his countrymen then in France, Mr. Jefferson took a strong interest in favor of the popular cause, and from his prior habits of thought, the men with whom he associated, and a residence all the time at the court of Versailles, it is not surprising that the abuses of monarchy should be ever present to his mind, and that he should suppose liberty (even when he returned to America) could sustain no danger but from the executive power. The fears, therefore, of Mr. Jefferson took a different direction from those of Colonel Hamilton, and all his precautions were used to check and limit the exercise of the authorities claimed by the *general* government.

I shall proceed to one feature of difference more. The war left in the American people, very naturally, a strong attachment to France and enmity to Great Britain. This sentiment was universal, and found its way into the cabinet; but Colonel Hamilton thought that no such sentiment should influence the political conduct of America; Jefferson maintained the contrary.

The press was not silent. The *Gazette* of the United States supported the measures of Hamilton and the federal government; the *National Gazette* was the paper of the opposition. These papers arraigned the motives of those they differed from with equal asperity and injustice.

The two secretaries, in the mean time, were eternally at variance. The President implored and admonished in vain; he loved the men, he respected them; he had a great, a sincere regard and esteem, he told them, for both; his earnest wish, his fondest hope, was, that, in-

stead of wounding suspicions and irritating charges, there might be liberal allowances, mutual forbearances, and temporizing yieldings on all sides. "Differences," said he, in one of his letters to the Attorney-general,\* "in political opinions are as unavoidable as, to a certain point, they may be necessary; but it is exceedingly to be regretted, that subjects cannot be discussed with temper, on the one hand, or decisions submitted to on the other, without improperly implicating the motives which led to them; and this regret borders on chagrin, when we find that men of abilities, zealous patriots, having the same general objects in view, and the same upright intentions to prosecute them, will not exercise more charity in deciding on the opinions and actions of each other."

Now from these transactions some general hints may be drawn, and references made to our own politics. It is often said, that those who are in administration have no wish but the emoluments of their office, and that those who are in opposition have no meaning but to get their share. Such are the views often taken by the parties of each other, or rather by the violent men in each party of each other, and sometimes by very sagacious men, as they conceive themselves to be, among the public at large. Yet in America we see the same appearances taking place as with us: ministry and opposition; government newspapers and opposition newspapers; mutual suspicions and invectives; ribaldry and rage; discontent and clamor; and, though Hamilton himself and Knox were afterwards obliged to resign their offices, from the inadequate nature of their salaries, the same declamation about the emoluments of office: the phenomena are just the same, and therefore the shallowness of the very elegant solution that I have just mentioned of such political occurrences in a free government, the supposition that every thing is on each side a mere question of plunder, need not further be insisted upon.

You will now be able, I conceive, even from the few passages I have quoted, to form a general idea of the situation of America during the first sitting of the federal government; and you will, I apprehend, draw the conclusion which I am all along proposing to you, — that civil liberty may be endangered, not, as in general, from the *strength*, but sometimes from the very weakness, of the executive power.

Now in the state of things which has thus in a general manner

\* To Alexander Hamilton, Secretary of the Treasury, Aug. 26, 1792. See Marshall, Vol. v. Note to p. 358; Sparks's Writings of Washington, Vol. x. pp. 283, 284.

The mistake here noted, though in itself quite unimportant, claims a moment's observation, as illustrating the haste with which the present lecture was manifestly drawn up. The extract in the text was taken from Marshall, who introduces it with the following remarks: — "About the same time a letter was addressed to the Attorney-general on the same subject. The following extract is taken from one of the twenty-sixth of August to the Secretary of the Treasury." Professor Smyth evidently glanced only at the first of these two sentences; hence his error in speaking of the letter which he quotes as addressed to the Attorney-general. — N.



been exhibited to you, the French Revolution took place. You will not suppose that this could be an event indifferent to America; that every thing which assumed the form of executive power in her government should not be shaken to the centre. Happily, the first Congress, or, if I may so speak, the first specimen of the federal government, was terminated in March, 1793,\* while Washington could be once more the representative of that executive power; and Washington being not only a man of great ability and patriotism, but, what was of even still greater importance at the time, a man of most sober judgment, America and her government escaped the injurious influence of this most tremendous event.

It is not within the limits I have prescribed to these lectures to enter into transactions of this kind: whenever I advance in the course of history so far that the French Revolution comes in sight, I turn upon my steps, and take some new direction; and this, therefore, I now do. I do so the more readily, because on the subject of the interference of the French in the concerns of America there cannot be two opinions; but that part of Marshall's work which relates to affairs so critical cannot, I am sure, be hereafter overlooked by you.

The conduct of Washington, indeed, "great in these moments, as in all the past," remains above all praise; he *persuaded* his country, he *enabled* his country, to stand aloof from the unhappy storm of European politics; he resigned his popularity to accomplish so great an end; and he maintained the constitution over which he presided by a serene and dignified confidence in its merits, and a calm exercise of its acknowledged powers and authority. He was insulted, he was resisted in his own executive department as the chief magistrate of America, by the French ambassador; no intemperate expression, however, escaped him in his official communications, either to his own legislature or to that ambassador. The labors of the press, the enthusiasm of the people, the intrigues of democratic societies, who voted themselves forsooth the guardians of American liberty, the natural sentiments of hatred to England, all were united against the temper and wisdom of Washington; but he rose superior to them all. He contented himself with steadily maintaining the principles of the laws of nations, and the regulations of his own government; and he then laid an able exposition of his case before the French government, and calmly desired the recall of their ambassador. A new ambassador was sent from France; the clouds grew lighter, the thunders rolled away, and the horizon at length cleared up, discovering the President left in the same place and attitude by the storm in which the storm had found him; but the countenances of all wise and good men were instantly turned upon him with the most animated smiles of reverence and love.

\* The second Congress    The first Congress terminated, as before observed (p. 654), in March, 1791. — N.

Differences, in like manner, of the most serious nature had occurred between the United States and Great Britain; differences which had inflamed, in like manner, to the most intolerable degree, the members of the legislature and the different parties of America. The President once more listened to the tempest, and, after watching its progress for some time, decided upon his measure. He addressed the Senate in the following manner: —

“The communications which I have made to you during your present session, from the despatches of our minister in London, contain a serious aspect of our affairs with Great Britain. But as peace ought to be pursued with unremitted zeal, before the last resource, which has so often been the scourge of nations, and cannot fail to check the advanced prosperity of the United States, is contemplated, I have thought proper to nominate, and do hereby nominate, John Jay, as envoy extraordinary of the United States to his Britannic Majesty.”

Scarcely any public act of the President drew upon his administration a greater degree of censure than this: this censure constitutes a most striking part of his merit. The result was, that, instead of making a war with England, he made a treaty of commerce.

That this treaty should be reprobated, because it had not laid England at the feet of America, cannot be wondered at. In points of this nature all nations are the same, equally selfish and unreasonable. Town and country meetings (not the best judges of such subjects) were everywhere held. The mind of Washington was unusually anxious, and even disturbed. But, at length, the confidence which was felt in the judgment and virtue of the chief magistrate began silently to produce its proper effect; and though the majority of the House of Representatives (the more popular part of the legislature) was against the treaty, a clear majority of the *people* (marvellous to relate) at last declared themselves in favor of it, — that is, in favor of prosperity and peace.

I cannot go into the detail of the merits of Washington. In the course of his administration he had to assert the constitutional rights of the executive power against the House of Representatives. In the year 1794, he had to issue his proclamations, call forth the militias, and put down by force (every lenient measure having been tried in vain) a positive insurrection in Pennsylvania; and he had continued to maintain the proper exercise of authority, the principles of peace, of national justice, and of civil liberty, till, amid the wild effusions of virulence and folly, he was at last himself accused even of speculation, and of plundering the public, in the discharge of his office: it was even thought necessary that the Secretary of the Treasury should produce his accounts.

The period, however, at length arrived when Washington thought he might retire, — when the situation of America allowed him, as he conceived, to consult his own inclinations. As the last service he



could offer, he drew up a valedictory address, in which he endeavoured to impress upon his countrymen those great political truths which had been the guides of his own administration, and which could alone, in his opinion, form a sure and solid basis for the happiness, the independence, and the liberty of America. This composition is not unworthy of him, for it is comprehensive, provident, affectionate, and wise. You will conceive the topics of it: gratitude to his countrymen for their confidence and support on every occasion; the necessity and the advantages of the federal system, and of a government as strong as was consistent with the perfect security of liberty. "Liberty," he observed, "is little else than a name, where the government is too feeble to withstand the enterprises of faction, to confine each member of the society within the limits prescribed by the laws, and to maintain all in the secure and tranquil enjoyment of the rights of person and property"; that, however useful might be the spirit of party (and he thought it might be useful in governments of a monarchical kind, and to keep alive the spirit of liberty), the contrary was the case in governments purely elective; that of the dispositions and habits which lead to political prosperity religion and morality were the indispensable supports; that a volume could not trace all their connection with private and public felicity; and that, whatever might be conceded to the influence of refined education on minds of peculiar structure, reason and experience both forbade men to expect that national morality could prevail in exclusion of religious principle. He insisted that good faith and justice were to be observed to all nations. "Can it be," said he, "that Providence has not connected the permanent felicity of a nation with its virtue?" Respecting the conduct of America to the nations of Europe, his advice was impartiality, neutrality, — to have as little political connection as possible. It is but painful to observe his description of our European nations: — "Why," says he, "entangle our peace and prosperity in the toils of European ambition, rivalry, interest, humor, or caprice?"

"The sentiments of veneration," says his biographer, "with which this address was generally received, were manifested in almost every part of the Union. Some of the State legislatures directed it to be inserted at large in their journals, and nearly all of them passed resolutions expressing their respect for the person of the President, their high sense of his exalted services, and the emotions with which they contemplated his retirement from office."

I must conclude my account of Washington by observing that the behaviour of France made it necessary for America to disturb this great man once more in his retirement, and to place him at the head of her military force. Washington, indeed, expected that favorable alteration in the conduct of France which afterwards took place; but he lived not to see it; dying in December, 1799, after a short illness, and resigning his spirit, with a calm and untroubled mind, to the dis-

posal of that Almighty Being in whose presence he had acted his important part, and to whose kind providence he had so often committed, in many an anxious moment, in the cabinet and in the field, the destinies of his beloved country. "He was not," he said, "afraid to die."

To the historian, indeed, there are few characters that appear so little to have shared the common frailties and imperfections of human nature; there are but few particulars that can be mentioned even to his disadvantage. It is understood, for instance, that he was once going to commit an important mistake as a general in the field; but he had at least the very great merit of listening to Lee (a man whom he could not like, and who was even his rival), and of *not* committing the mistake. Instances may be found where perhaps it may be thought that he was decisive to a degree that partook of severity and harshness, or even more; but how innumerable were the decisions which he had to make, how difficult and how important, through the eventful series of twenty years of command in the cabinet or the field! Let it be considered what it is to have the management of a revolution, and afterwards the maintenance of order. Where is the man that in the history of our race has ever succeeded in attempting successively the one and the other, — not on a small scale, a petty state in Italy, or among a horde of barbarians, but in an enlightened age, when it is not easy for one man to rise superior to another, and in the eyes of mankind, —

"A kingdom for a stage, . . . .  
And monarchs to behold the swelling scene"?

The plaudits of his country were continually sounding in his ears, and neither the judgment nor the virtues of the man were ever disturbed. Armies were led to the field with all the enterprise of a hero, and then dismissed with all the equanimity of a philosopher. Power was accepted, was exercised, was resigned, precisely at the moment and in the way that duty and patriotism directed. Whatever was the difficulty, the trial, the temptation, or the danger, there stood the soldier and the citizen, eternally the same, without fear and without reproach, and there was the man who was not only at all times virtuous, but at all times wise.

The merit of Washington by no means ceases with his campaigns, it becomes, after the peace of 1783, even more striking than before; for the same man, who, for the sake of liberty, was ardent enough to resist the power of Great Britain and hazard every thing on this side the grave, at a later period had to be temperate enough to resist the same spirit of liberty, when it was mistaking its proper objects and transgressing its appointed limits. The American Revolution was to approach him, and he was to kindle in the general flame; the French Revolution was to reach him and to consume but too many of his countrymen, and his *own* "ethereal mould, incapable of stain," was



to "purge off the baser fire, victorious." But all this was done : he might have been pardoned, though he had failed amid the enthusiasm of those around him, and when liberty was the delusion ; but the foundations of the moral world were shaken, and not the understanding of Washington.

To those who must necessarily contemplate this remarkable man at a distance, there is a kind of fixed calmness in his character that seems not well fitted to engage our affections (constant superiority we rather venerate than love); but he had those who loved him (his friends and his family), as well as the world and those that admired.

As a ruler of mankind, however, he may be proposed as a model. Deeply impressed with the original rights of human nature, he never forgot that the end and meaning and aim of all just government was the happiness of the people, and he never exercised authority till he had first taken care to put himself clearly in the right. His candor, his patience, his love of justice were unexampled ; and this, though *naturally* he was not patient, — much otherwise, highly irritable. He therefore deliberated well, and placed his subject in every point of view, before he decided ; and his understanding being correct, he was thus rendered, by the nature of his faculties, his strength of mind, and his principles, the man of all others to whom the interests of his fellow-creatures might with most confidence be intrusted ; that is, he was the first of the rulers of mankind.

The American Revolution is a great epoch in the history of the world, and nothing but the appearance of the French Revolution, so fitted, from its tremendous circumstances and unknown consequences, to sweep away every thing else from the curiosity and anxieties of mankind, could have made men insensible, as they may now be, to an event in itself so striking and important. By the American Revolution the foundations of a new empire are laid, immense in extent, unrivalled in natural advantages, and at a safe distance from the hostilities of the Old World ; a new empire is to begin its course where other empires have ended, with all the intellectual, moral, and religious advantages which other empires have attained only during the time that has elapsed since the records of history began. A receptacle is now opened for every human being, of whatever country, and whatever be his disposition or fortunes, opinions or genius. What is to be the result of such an admixture and collision of all personal qualities and intellectual endowments ?

The government, too, is founded, not only on a popular basis, but on a basis the most popular that can well be conceived. It must even be confessed that in America is to be made a most novel and important experiment, and it is this : — with how small a portion of restraint and influence the blessings of order and Christianity can be administered to a large community. It must be observed, indeed, that this experiment is to be made under such particular advantages

of a new country as must always prevent America from being a precedent for older states and empires. This is true ; yet, to the reasoners of after ages, it will be useful to learn from the event what may reasonably be expected from mere human nature when placed in the *most favorable* situation, and what it is that government may properly attempt to do for mankind, and what not. This I think will hereafter be shown, when all the attendant circumstances have been properly balanced and considered. What, however, will be the result ?

I am much disposed to offer this subject to your reflections, and therefore, as a conjecture, though an obvious one, I should say (though I cannot allude to what may be said of a contrary nature) that the great event to be expected is, that this empire should break up into two or more independent states or republics, and that at some distant period the continent of America may be destined to exhibit all the melancholy scenes of devastation and war which have so long disgraced the continent of Europe. This, however, must be considered as the grand calamity and failure of the whole ; it can arise only from a want of strength in the federal government, — that is, from the friends of liberty not venturing to render the executive power sufficiently effective. This is the common mistake of all popular governments : in governments more or less monarchical the danger is always of an opposite nature.

In the mean time, I know not how any friend to his species, much less any Englishman, can cease to wish with the most earnest anxiety for the success of the great experiment to which I have alluded, for the success of the constitution of America. I see not, in like manner, how any friend to his species, much less any American, can forbear for a moment to wish for a continuance of the constitution of England, — that the Revolution of 1688 should for ever answer all its important purposes for England, as the Revolution of 1776 has hitherto done for America. What efforts can be made for the government of mankind so reasonable as these, — a limited monarchy and a limited republic ? Add to this that the success of the cause of liberty in the two countries cannot but be of the greatest advantage to each, — a limited monarchy and a limited republic being well fitted, by their comparison and separate happiness, each to correct the peculiar tendencies to evil which must necessarily be found in the other. Successful, therefore, be both, and while the records of history last, be they both successful ! that they may eternally hold up to mankind the lessons of practical freedom, and explain to them the only secret that exists of all national prosperity and happiness. the sum and substance of which must for ever consist in mild government and tolerant religion, — that is, rationally understood, in civil and religious liberty.

Mark the difference between Europe and Asia. What is it, what has it ever been ? Slavery in the one, and freedom in the other. Take another view, more modern and more domestic. Mist is in the



valley, and sterility is on the mountain of the Highlander ; his land is the land of tempest and of gloom, but there is intelligence in his looks and gladness in his song. On the contrary, incense is in the gale, and the laughing light of Nature is in the landscape of the Grecian island ; but

“ Why do its tuneful echoes languish,  
Mute but to the voice of anguish ? ”

Yet where was it that once flourished the heroes, the sages, and the orators of antiquity ? What is there of sublimity and beauty in our moral feelings, or in our works of art, that is not stamped with the impression of their genius ?

Give civil and religious liberty, you give every thing, — knowledge and science, heroism and honor, virtue and power. Deny them, and you deny every thing : in vain are the gifts of nature : there is no harvest in the fertility of the soil ; there is no cheerfulness in the radiance of the sky ; there is no thought in the understanding of man ; and there is in his heart no hope : the human animal sinks and withers ; abused, disinherited, stripped of the attributes of his kind, and no longer formed after the image of his God.





## NOTES.

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\* \* The Notes are always taken from Note-books that were laid on the table of the Lecture-room.

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### INTRODUCTORY LECTURE.

THE professorship of Modern History and Languages was founded by George the First, in 1724, on the recommendation of the Duke of Newcastle. His Grace has the merit of being one of those very few ministers, since the times of the Reformation, who have endeavoured to amplify the means and extend the usefulness of the literary establishments of this country.

On the death of Dr. Turner, in 1762, the professorship became vacant, and the modesty and pride of Gray at last yielded to the influence of his friends, and he applied to Lord Bute for the situation. It was, however, given to the tutor of Sir James Lowther; and the most distinguished man of letters then in the University, and perhaps the most elegant scholar of the age, was left to his poverty, or to a state that but too much resembled it.

At a subsequent period, while he was still pursuing "the silent tenor of his doom," the professorship was once more vacant. It must ever have been amongst the most pleasing recollections of the Duke of Grafton, that he was the minister whose fortune it was to have directed the rays of royal bounty to their noblest object, and to have cheered, with a parting gleam, the twilight path and closing hours of the poet Gray.

His Grace had a second time the merit of making an honorable choice in the late professor, Dr. Symonds. From him the chair has received a very valuable library. But it is to be lamented, that, a little before his death, he destroyed the lectures he had delivered, and all his historical papers.

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### LECTURES I. - IV.

#### I.

SAVAGE and civilized life may each exhibit the disgusting extremes of opposite evils; but it is in vain to fly from the one, to be lost in the still more frightful degradation of the other; not to say that the propensities and capacities and irresistible impulses of our nature seem clearly to indicate that we are not intended for solitude and torpor, but for society and improvement.

#### II.

It is not easy to lay down maxims in politics; man is such a compound being of reason and feeling, so alive to the impression of the moment, so entirely at the mercy (in his political capacity, at least) of the present uneasiness.

The political discourses of Hume are the best models we have of the reasoning that belongs to subjects of this nature. They best admonish us of the slow step with which we should advance, and the wary distrust with which we should look around, before we think that we have reached a maxim in politics, that is, a general principle, on the steady efficiency of which, in real practice, we may always depend.

"Civil knowledge," says Lord Bacon, "is conversant about a subject which of all others is most immersed in matter, and hardliest reduced to axiom."

## III.

*Recueil des Historiens des Gaules et de la France.*

RELIGIOUS societies, like those of the Benedictines, have often been stigmatized as the abodes of laziness and superstition; but sweeping accusations are seldom just. To this society, for instance, literature is indebted for works of the most serious importance; works of such labor and extent, that they have been begun by one generation of men, and left to be prosecuted and finished by those which succeeded. This is a sort of service which could not well have been rendered to mankind but by those who did not labor for profit, and who were always in a state of continued existence, by being linked together as members of the same society.

## IV.

CHARLEMAGNE undertook, at his leisure, to learn to write. What a characteristic of the age! "Sed parum prospere successit," says Eginhard, "labor præposterus ac sero inchoatus." Of such a man, so unlettered, the merit is the greater, as we are told, at the same time, that he attended to the liberal education of his children; that he had books read to him while at table; that he acquired the Latin language, and a knowledge of the Greek; that he zealously cultivated the liberal arts, and bestowed on the professors every mark of respect and honor; that he studied the sciences of rhetoric, logic, and astronomy; that he ordered the laws of his subject nations to be drawn up and reduced to writing. His great merit seems to have been, that he knew his best interests and duties, and therefore felt for the people, and patronized the free assemblies of the state.

## V.

*Prologus Legis Salicæ.*

PLACUIT atque convenit inter Francos, et eorum procures, ut propter servandum inter se pacis studium, omnia incrementa veterum rixarum rescare deberent: et quia ceteris gentibus juxta se positis fortitudinis brachio præminebant, ita etiam legum auctoritate præcellerent; ut juxta qualitatem causarum sumeret criminalis actio terminum. Extiterunt igitur inter eos electi de pluribus quatuor viri his nominibus, Wisogastus, Bodogastus, Salogastus, et Widogastus, in villis quæ ultra Rhenum sunt, Salehaim, et Bodohaim, et Widohaim: qui per tres mallos (*markets*) convenientes, omnem causarum originem sollicitè disceptando tractantes, de singulis judicium decreverunt hoc modo.

Anno ab incarnatione Domini nostri Jesu Christi DCCXCVIII., indictione sextâ, dominus Karolus Rex Francorum inclytus hunc libellum tractatus legis Salicæ scribere ordinavit.

## VI.

THE conquered Romans were indulged by the Barbarians in the free use of their own law (the Theodosian Code), especially in the cases of marriage, inheritance, and other important transactions of life.

## VII.

WITH respect to property, the student will learn the situation of the Romans by consulting the thirtieth book of Montesquieu, from the fifth chapter to the sixteenth.

The Franks seem to have seized only on a part of their lands, probably because, in the then existing state of society, they had no occasion for the whole. Those of the Northern nations who settled near Italy were induced or obliged to treat them more liberally. The Burgundians, for instance, took two thirds of the land, and one third of the bondmen.

The slaves were not Romans, but those unhappy men who were carried into captivity by a conquering army, retiring, as was often the case, from a province or a kingdom which it had overrun.

Freemen among the Barbarians seem to have paid no taxes themselves.

Of the Romans, some seem to have been proprietors, and some tributaries: by which term was probably meant those who paid rent.



When the Burgundian empire was attacked by Clovis, its fall was delayed by the assistance which the Burgundians received from their conquered subjects, the Romans: one instance among many of the policy of all mild government, — so often exhibited, but in vain, to the humanity of those who direct the counsels of states and empires.

The Burgundians, the Lombards, and the Visigoths had been more connected with the Romans; and their laws and their codes are, therefore, favorably distinguished from the codes of the more simple and rude Barbarians.

## VIII.

MANY efforts seem to have been made by these Barbarians to preserve integrity and despatch in the judges, and other officers connected with the administration of justice. This is the great difficulty. "Custodes ipsos quis custodiet?"

The judges must be few, the bar intelligent, the public interested in their own political happiness: that is, the judges of a country, like all other human beings, can be kept virtuous only by being subjected to the criticism of their fellow-creatures.

## IX.

THESE ancient Codes and Capitularies remained long in force in Germany, longer in Italy, still longer in France. Their authority was shaken by the incursions of the Normans, and by the weakness of government under the successors of Charlemagne.

Curious particulars occur in these Capitularies: the influence of the clergy more especially, the deep and dark superstition of the people, and, on the whole, the unhappy state of society.

The clergy, however, were considered as the patrons and guardians of justice and humanity, as far as justice and humanity were then understood. "Sacerdotes Dei," says one of the laws (30th\*) of the Visigoths, "quibus pro remediis oppressorum vel pauperum divinitus cura commissa est," &c., &c. This was a law of one of their princes in the year 670.

## X.

SYMPTOMS of the feudal system appear in these laws. Of the 9th law of the 9th book† the title is, — "De his qui in exercitum *constituto loco vel tempore definito* non successerint, aut refugerint; vel quæ pars *servorum uniuscujusque* in eadem expeditione *debeat proficisci*." But quite distinctly about the year 801, in the edicts of Charlemagne, cap. 1: ‡ — "In primis quicunque *beneficia* habere videntur, omnes in hostem veniant." So the second. And again, — "Omnis *liber homo*," &c., &c.

## XI.

PARTICULARS of an amusing nature are sometimes found in these ancient documents. "Si quis medicus," says one of the laws of the Visigoths who possessed Spain, "dum flebotomum exercet, et ingenuum debilitaverit, centum solidos coactus exsolvat. Si vero mortuus fuerit, continuo propinquis tradendus est, ut quod de eo facere voluerint, habeant potestatem."§ The Sangrados of Spain seem to have made their appearance early.

## XII.

THE superstition of the age, as may be supposed, furnishes many laws and observances and ceremonies that may make the reader, in his happier state of religious knowledge, "smile or sigh," according to his particular temperament.

The intolerance of these lawgivers is such as might be expected; for the Barbarian of the seventh century speaks thus, alluding to unbelievers (a title in all probability then easily acquired): — "In virtute Dei aggrediar, hostes ejus insequar, æmulos ejus persequar," &c., &c., till he renders them like the "pulverem aut lutum sordidum platearum," &c., &c. The reason why his fellow-creatures are to be thus trampled into

\* Cod. Leg. Wisigoth. Lib. II. Tit. I. cap. xxx. ed. Lindenbrogtii. — N.

† Ibid. Lib. IX. Tit. II. cap. ix. — N.

‡ Capitulare Anni DCCCVII. Capit. Reg. Franc. ed. Baluz. Tom. I. col. 457. — N.

§ Cod. Leg. Wisigoth. Lib. XI. Tit. I. cap. vi. — N.

the dust is much the same that would have been given by the barbarians of all subsequent centuries: — “Ut dum fideles populos in religionis sacræ pace possederim, atque infideles ad concordiam religiosæ pacis adduxerim, et mihi crescat in gloria præmium; ut virtutem Dei dilatem, atque augeam regnum.”\*

## XIII.

AGAINST the poor Jews there was an edict, “Ne Judæi sectam suam defendere audeant,” — which, it seems, was “religioni nostræ insultantes,” &c.† Yet were law-givers like these able to express themselves, as may be seen in the 15th law, with all the fervor of eloquence and piety: — “Juro et per Jesum,” &c., &c. p. 232.‡

## XIV.

IN these Codes and Capitularies may be seen evidently the origin of many of the peculiarities of our own laws and customs, and the practice of all the more distinguishing rites of the Roman Catholic communion: the services, even as here given, are solemn and affecting.

Lindembrogius and Baluze are the authors where every thing that concerns these subjects is to be found.

On the feudal system I have made a few observations and bound them up separately with Mr. Butler's note, and they lie on the table.

## XV.

*Progress of Society.*

It is to be feared that Stuart, in his criticisms on Dr. Robertson, was but too much affected by feelings of personal animosity: he was a man of powerful but irregular mind, and, in his differences with such a man as the Principal, must have been in the wrong. I have understood this to be the case.

## XVI.

*Mahomet.*

THE dreadful alliance of military and religious enthusiasm has often been exhibited on the theatre of the world: but the fact is, that the military spirit is easily associated with any strong passion. The soldiers of the Roman republic in ancient times, and of the French nation in our own times, are instances to this effect; and the rulers of any state should be very careful how they place their enemies within the reach of any union of this kind.

For the life of Mahomet we have to depend on Abulfeda, who did not reign till 1310, and who cannot appeal to any writer of the first century of the Hegira. This is a disagreeable circumstance. — See Gibbon, note, Chap. 50.

## XVII.

THE French peers seem never to have been satisfied, unless the origin of their distinction was lost in the obscurity of the earliest ages.

A reasonable opinion is delivered by the President Hénault, in the Life of Hugh Capet. Montesquieu may be consulted, and Mably

## XVIII.

THE rise of the Norman empire in Sicily, in the relation of which history becomes romance, should also be considered. It may be read in Gibbon.

## XIX.

THE history of the Albigenses, and the crusade against them, are deserving of at

\* Cod. Leg. Wisigoth. Lib. XII. Tit. II. cap. i. — N.

† Ibid. Lib. XII. Tit. III. cap. ix. — N.

‡ Ibid. Lib. XII. Tit. III. cap. xv. — N.



tion. An account may be found in Père Daniel, or rather in Velly. But the French writers must always be read with due allowance, when the principles of civil and religious liberty are concerned.

These heretics, the Albigenses, were among the precursors of the Reformation. Their manners and opinions have been probably misrepresented and vilified. Their fate and history are melancholy and interesting.

The subject seems properly stated by Dr. Ranken, in his late History of France; and it is here that the student will in the most ready manner acquire a proper idea of it.

## XX.

*St. Louis (Louis the Ninth, of France).*

THE penal provisions of St. Louis bear a sanguinary and ferocious character.

The efforts which he made for the serfs became, from their very feebleness, an honor to the legislator, and an additional disgrace to the age.

The serf, says the lawgiver, may be pursued wherever he flies for liberty. But all causes of serfage are to be decided by the ordinary judges of the crown.

In all cases, where the proofs for and against the serfage are equal, let the decision be in favor of liberty.

Let the child of a serf and a freewoman be free like the mother: "a new and extraordinary favor," says the historian.

## XXI.

WITH respect to the more early jurisprudence of France, it may be observed, that the ancient Codes and Capitularies had fallen into disuse; ancient customs, which had always existed along with them, multiplied as they declined. Written collections of these were often made.

The monarchs of the Capetian race, when they gave their fiefs, prescribed by charter the terms on which they were to be held. The result of the whole was, that each seigniory had its particular usages.

Among such various systems of jurisprudence, the "establishments of St. Louis" have always been considered with great respect, on account of their wisdom and antiquity.

In 1453, Charles the Seventh made an effort to reduce the various customs of France into some form, and to ascertain their nature: a measure of such difficulty, that it lingered till the reign of Louis the Twelfth, and was not completed till 1609. The whole, when finished and sanctioned, was called "Coutumier de France," and has been edited by Richebourg, in four volumes folio.— See Butler's *Horæ Juridicæ*.

## XXII.

*Power of the Pope.*

CHARLEMAGNE elected the Pope, and was, therefore, supreme; but the Pope had anointed Charlemagne, and was, therefore, supreme also. The scale of power was thus left to incline to the one side or the other.

The steps, by which the power of the Pope became a despotism so complete, are marked with sufficient minuteness by Giannone, in his ecclesiastical chapters, particularly in his fifth chapter of his nineteenth book, which will supply adequate information.

The first great point was to exempt the clergy from secular jurisdiction, and this was at length accomplished.

The second, to include within the description of clergy all who had ever received the tonsure.

The third, to draw all causes within their jurisdiction which involved any breach of faith; for where there was a breach of faith, there was sin, and therefore the soul was concerned, and therefore the Church.

The fourth, to bring all testaments within their jurisdiction; for testaments, it seems, were a matter of conscience. Add to this, that the testator was to be buried by the Church, and his soul to be put into a state of rest and quiet; his movables were therefore to be seized, in the first place, to put the Church into a state of rest and quiet also.

He might, too, have made bequests to the Church: a point which the Church were, therefore, to ascertain.

Again, if among the litigants there was a clergyman, the cause was to be referred to the Church.

Then the Church was to be appealed to, if the civil lawyers disagreed, — a circumstance which might certainly happen; for the Jews, in a similar case, had always, it was observed, applied to the Levites.

Then they were to supply the defects of negligence and partiality in the secular judges.

Then they were to take cognizance of all causes where the poor and strangers, where wards and widows, were concerned; for of such they considered themselves as protectors.

Next, they insisted that many crimes, such as bigamy and usury, were not only, in strictness, of an ecclesiastical nature, but were at least liable to *both* jurisdictions, the spiritual as well as the temporal; and therefore they took care to exert proper speed and arrive at the offender first.

Lastly, all cases where matrimony was concerned; for matrimony was a sacrament.

All this was accompanied by the tribunal of the Inquisition, which was established in the thirteenth century, and which originated in a natural but most unfortunate mistake, that heresy was a crime that must at all events be prevented and punished. The civil power, before the appearance of the Inquisition, had proceeded to fine, imprisonment, and, at last, death; so rapid is the dreadful march of intolerance! But when the preaching friars, and the friars minores, the Dominican and Franciscan orders, had sprung up, the Dominicans were soon ready to execute any commission of inquiry into heresy; and the tribunal of the Inquisition was immediately in a state of activity, and arrayed in all its tremendous apparatus of familiars, inquisitors, torturers, and executioners.

Finally, it was not only in spiritual, but temporal matters, that the ecclesiastical power was to be supreme. Princes were to be summoned to Rome to purge themselves of their crimes. The Pope himself was to be the lord of the universe.

The means by which such a system of jurisdiction was extended and established appear to have been the different processes of spiritual punishment, ending at last in total excommunication; a sentence, of the horrors of which no one now can have the slightest conception.

### XXIII.

IN Dryden's play of *Sebastian*, Act ii. Scene 1, may be found the image applied by Hume to the clergy of every age and description.

DORAX to the MUFTI.

"Content you with monopolizing heaven,  
And let this little hanging ball alone;  
For, give you but a foot of conscience there,  
And you, like Archimedes, toss the globe."

The image is not too strong, when applied to the clergy of the Dark Ages. Hume was a reader of Dryden's plays, and probably borrowed in this instance, but without acknowledgment.

### XXIV.

WHEN Charlemagne was no more, the Saxons rushed out in every direction, as did afterwards the Danes and Normans; and they were able, from the almost incredible lightness of their vessels, their desperate seamanship and hardy courage, to be a more dreadful torment to the peaceful inhabitants of Europe than even the Northern conquerors themselves had been. They established themselves in Sicily, a large division of France, in England, &c., &c.

### XXV.

IN the history of the free and commercial cities, there are various traits of the operations of the principle of utility.



## XXVI.

SOME idea must be formed by the student of a very fatiguing portion of history: the times of the Hanseatic league, the struggles of the Emperors and Popes, &c., &c. Pfeffel may be consulted, and Gibbon. The student, through all the different dynasties noted down in Pfeffel, must mark well the relative power and pretensions of the Popes and Emperors: the effort of the See to deprive the Emperors of the nomination to the vacant benefices, to transfer to the Holy See the election even of the Emperor himself, &c., &c.

Gregory the Seventh was the great hero of this species of warfare against the improvement and happiness of society. Excommunication was the great engine by which the Papal See performed its wonders. The Popes, even while arrogating to themselves the right of dethroning Emperors, had the hardiness to reason, — "*Officii nostri est regem investire: ergo quem meritum investimus, immeritum quare non divestiamus?*"

It is the misery of mankind, that there is no cause so unreasonable, for which something like reasoning may not be produced. It is thus that men originally good are often led step by step into serious faults, and that bad men can affect to palliate and even convert their crimes into virtues.

In the course of this struggle, Conrad, king of the Romans, and heir to the Emperor, appeared against him in arms. It was in vain that the unhappy father appealed to the rights of his crown, and the common feelings of human nature. "I acknowledge not," said this abominable son, "either for my emperor or father, one who is excommunicated."

## XXVII.

THE reign of Frederic the Second should be particularly noticed, as it exhibits the lengthened and intrepid resistance of a most accomplished and able prince to the Papal See. Innocent, when Pope, was no longer his friend. The official character, as usual, triumphed over the natural feelings of the man.

## XXVIII.

THE towns and cities, the great hope of mankind at this period, acquired freedom and importance gradually and insensibly. By Henry the Fifth and Lothaire they were converted each into a sort of little republic, and their number was multiplied. The artisans were enfranchised, &c., &c., till men who had once been objects of sale and transfer emerged at length from their unnatural degradation.

## XXIX.

FREDERIC was a great patron of the cities of the Empire.

It is a trait of these times, that Frederic, even in the cities he patronized, exercised the power of uniting in marriage, as he pleased, the children of the principal citizens.

## XXX.

GIBBON has made several observations on the different Emperors of these different dynasties, and on their contests in Italy.

Giannone should likewise be consulted. His work is a History of Naples; but many parts may be selected of great general interest and importance.

The observations of Pfeffel, on the great interregnum of twenty-three years between Frederic the Second and Rodolph, should be particularly considered.

## XXXI.

THE most extraordinary man of his age was Louis the Ninth (St. Louis), uniting the magnanimity of the hero and the simplicity of the child.

The student can scarcely be excused, if he does not turn aside to look at the account of his expedition given by Joinville, especially as Mr. Johnes has so laudably employed himself in rendering it accessible to every reader by a new translation, accompanied by

extracts from the notes and dissertations of the indefatigable Du Cange. The knights, the monarch, and their followers are shown in the faithful mirror of their ordinary conduct. The picture is the picture of ancient manners and opinions.

The Lord de Joinville is no philosopher, but he incidentally supplies materials to those who are. "The king," says he, "summoned all the barons to Paris to renew their oath of fealty and homage; but I," says Joinville, "*who was not his man*, would not take the oath." This passage has often been quoted, to show that the under-vassals owed fidelity and homage to their own immediate lords *only and exclusively*: an important distinction, very favorable to disorder, &c.

### XXXII.

IN another passage, notice is taken of what were called "the pleadings at the gate"; and the second dissertation from Du Cange, quoted by Mr. Johnes, exhibits concisely the natural progress of jurisprudence, from the first audience of complaints by the kings themselves, to the dispensation of justice by their governors and deputies; the establishment of courts of justice in their palaces; and, lastly, the subdivision of the Parliament, or great court of justice, into different courts or chambers.

"Again, in the instructions of St. Louis to his son, given by Joinville, the king says, "Maintain such liberties and franchises as thy ancestors have done; for, by the riches and power of thy principal towns, thy enemies will be afraid of affronting or attacking thee, — more especially *thy equals*, the barons or such like." These last words illustrate and enforce the reasonings of philosophical writers on these times.

In the narrative of Joinville we see the readiness and confidence with which the crusaders converted every operation of the general laws of the Deity into marks of the particular interference of Heaven. This has always been one of the characteristics of enthusiasm.

## LECTURES V., VI.

IN reading these Lectures on the subject of England, I took occasion to introduce the following remarks.

### I.

WE are now in possession of some valuable publications from the pen of Sir James Mackintosh on the subject of English history. These octavo volumes are intended by the editor for the general reader, and are proposed as a sort of popular history.

But the fact is, that the mind of this eminent man of letters is of too philosophic a nature, too generalizing, and too enlightened, to admit of his writing for any one who can be described by any such term as *the general reader*. These are not books, unassuming as they may look, that he who runs may read; he who reads must move slowly and stop often. Sir James is one who necessarily thinks in a manner that, however it may afterwards reward, will assuredly first require, the best thinking of any man who means to be benefited by what he reads.

I must mention, too, that there is an air of uncertainty about the pages of these little volumes, that renders them very agreeable. It is evidently quite impossible to know, as we proceed, what we are next to find, — that is, what a man so enlightened and so able may think it worth his while to observe.

We shall probably lose the great work which Sir James projected as a continuation of Hume. This, on every account, is for ever to be lamented; no one ever had access to such materials, or was so fitted to use them. But the present cabinet volumes will, no doubt, present to us the most valuable comments on the most important characters and periods of our history; — but these are treatises on history, not histories.

Since I wrote what you have just heard, this illustrious man of letters has sunk into the grave, from a slight accident and immaturity. No loss can be so great to the literary world. His understanding was of so superior a quality, his memory so astonishing, and his disposition so truly courteous and obliging, that he was always able and always willing to instruct every person who approached him. And on every occasion,



his entire sympathy with the great interests of mankind, and his enlightened comprehension of them, were distinctly marked. He was one of those whom, for the benefit of others, one could have wished exempt from the common lot of humanity. One could have said to him, as do the Persians to their king, — "Live for ever." He should have been exempted, too, from the common cares of our existence, and, instead of having to make provision for the day that was going over him, should have had nothing to do but to read, to think, and to write. Men of these great intellectual powers should not, like their fabled prototype, be chained to their rock with the vultures to tear them.

Some papers remain, which will afford a melancholy indication of what under favorable circumstances he might have done: what he has done, however, is of great value and will live. He can be properly estimated only by those who were fortunate enough to know him.

## II.

OF Mr. Hallam's Constitutional History I spoke in the following manner in my lectures in November, 1828.

Mr. Hallam's Constitutional History of England I must earnestly recommend, for it is a work of great research, great ability, great impartiality, often of very manly eloquence; the work of an enlightened lawyer, an accomplished scholar, and a steady assertor of the best interests of mankind. It is a source of great satisfaction to me that such a work exists, for every page is full of statements and opinions on every topic and character of consequence since the reign of Henry the Seventh; and these sentiments and opinions are so learned and well reasoned, that I am quite gratified to think that the student can now never want a guide and an instructor worthy to conduct and counsel him in his constitutional inquiries. Mr. Hallam is, indeed, a stern and severe critic, and the student may be allowed to love and honor many of our patriots, statesmen, and divines in a more warm and unqualified manner than does Mr. Hallam; but the perfect calmness of Mr. Hallam's temperament makes his standard of moral and political virtue high, and the fitter on that account to be presented to youthful minds.

There are objectionable passages, and even strange passages, more particularly in the notes; but they are of no consequence in a work of so vast a range, and of so much merit. And Mr. Hallam may have given offence, which could never have been his intention, to some good men, to whom their establishments are naturally so dear; but I see not how this was to be avoided, if he was to render equal justice to all persons and parties, all sects and churches, in their turn, — and if he was to do his duty, as he has nobly done, to the civil and religious liberties of his country.

## III.

THE story of England has of late been illustrated by many intelligent and laborious inquirers. We have had the Roman Catholic case stated by Dr. Lingard, an author of original inquiry and vigorous mind, — certainly a very skilful controversial writer. For similar reasons we may now consider ourselves as in possession of the republican case, during the times of Charles the First; for Mr. Godwin has dedicated four volumes to the subject, and for this express purpose. A new edition of Burnet has been given us. The History of Clarendon has at last, very creditably to our sister University, been presented to the public in its original state. Miss Aikin has drawn up interesting Memoirs of Queen Elizabeth and James the First, and an important work on the reign of Charles the First: she is a diligent and sagacious writer. There are treatises coming out, volume after volume, by a most entertaining and learned antiquarian, Mr. D'Israeli. And we have fierce and eloquent orations on the merits and demerits of the great personages of our history, ecclesiastical and civil, Laud, Clarendon, and others, in the different reviews by which our periodical literature is now distinguished.

There are several very agreeable and sensible publications by Lord John Russell. Recently has been published a posthumous work of Mr. Coxe, a literary laborer to whom the historical student is so much indebted, — the Pelham Papers: they supply the information that has been so long wanted, with respect to the politics and characters of the members of the Pelham and Newcastle administrations.

## IV.

*Edward the Confessor's Laws.*

THE laws of Edward the Confessor are lost. The great Alfred was a legislator; and Edward the Confessor is represented as having revised and improved the laws of his predecessor, Edgar, and therefore probably of Alfred, rather than as having instituted any code of his own. It might have been thought, therefore, that some information on this subject might be obtained from any writings that respected Alfred. There is a life of him by the monk Asserius, and there are laws of his which are come down to us, and which may be seen in Wilkins; but neither in the work of his biographer, nor in these laws of Alfred, can any thing be found which may enable us to understand what were the laws of Edward the Confessor.

It may, perhaps, give the student some insight into the nature of an inquiry like this, if he takes the trouble of following the subject through one, at least, of the notes of a learned antiquarian.

Eadmerius is a monkish writer, who gives the history of his own age, of William the First to William Rufus and Henry the First: his work was edited by the learned Selden. Now it is known that William the First entered into some agreement with his subjects respecting the laws of Edward the Confessor; and it might be expected that Eadmerius, when he gives the history of the reign of William, would also have given us some account of this remarkable code. But in the course of the history, the monk, with more than the stupidity of a monk, instead of giving us these laws, observes, that he "forbears to mention what was promulgated by William with respect to *secular* matters." So here we have a complete disappointment. This gives occasion to his editor, Selden, in a note, to consider the subject more at length.

Selden produces a passage from the Lichfield Chronicle, a very ancient monkish writing, from which it appears that the Conqueror, in the fourth year of his reign, granted the laws of Edward the Confessor to the intercession of his English subjects, — "*ad preces communitatis Anglorum*"; and that twelve men were chosen from each county, who were to collect and state what these laws were; and that what they said was to be written down by the Archbishop of York and Bishop of London. Here, then, we have a fact connected with the subject.

Another monkish historian, Roger Hoveden, who lived under Henry the Second and John, gives the same account, and he subjoins the laws themselves at full length. From him they are published by Wilkins; and here, then, we might suppose that we had reached the object of our inquiry. But not so. When we come to peruse them, there is little to be found which could make them so dear to the English commonalty; and by looking at the eleventh head, on *Dane-gelt*, we perceive the name of William the younger, or of William Rufus, which shows, as Selden observes, that they are of a later date than the time of the Conqueror, or at least most unskilfully interpolated. This, therefore, on the whole, is also a disappointment.

Selden has therefore recourse, in the next place, to Ingulphus, who was a sort of secretary to the Conqueror. Ingulphus, at the end of his History, tells us that he brought the code of Edward's laws, which William had authorized and renewed, from London to his own abbey of Croyland, for the purpose of securing, as he says, the society from the penalties which were contained in it "in the following manner." And now, then, we might expect once more to find the laws all subjoined. But here the History ends, and the laws are wanting in the MS.

But a new attempt is made by the illustrious antiquarian, — for these valuable men are possessed, at least, of the virtue of patience, — and in a later MS., written, he thinks about the year 1200, he finds a code at the end of it, which from the title should be the code required. This code he gives, and endeavours to translate. It is also given by Wilkins, and translated still more completely. But our disappointments are not here to cease. Even this copy of the code must surely be materially imperfect. We look in vain for those general provisions of protection to the subject, which must have made these laws so dear to our ancestors.

Finally, it is collected from the monkish historians, that Henry the First, to ingratiate himself with his subjects, granted them the laws of Edward the Confessor. A code of Henry's laws has come down to us, and may be seen in Wilkins. But it is a *grant* of Edward's laws that we find here mentioned, and no *detail* of the laws themselves. Here, then, we have once more a disappointment, and further research seems at an end.



The code of Henry was, no doubt, to a certain extent modified and meliorated according to this favorite model; but of the model itself no further knowledge can be obtained. Our lawyers and antiquarians are, therefore, left to conclude that these celebrated laws of Edward the Confessor may now be imaged to us by what is called "the common law of the land," or the unwritten collection of maxims and customs which are transmitted from lawyer to lawyer and from age to age, and have obtained reception and usage among our courts and judges.

## V.

*Charters.*

THE 9th of Henry the Third is the final one, and that, therefore, which is always commented upon.

Of the whole thirty-eight clauses, about one half respect merely the oppressions of the feudal system. But by the words of the thirty-eighth clause, the feudal tyranny, wherever relaxed between the king and his vassals, was to be relaxed between the superior and inferior, through all the links of the feudal subordination.

And of the thirty-eight clauses, some were of a general nature.

By the ninth and thirtieth, an effort was made for the benefit of commerce; protection afforded to the trading towns, foreign merchants, &c., &c.

The eleventh, twelfth, thirteenth, seventeenth, twenty-fourth, twenty-eighth, and thirty-fourth were intended for the better administration of justice.

In the twenty-sixth may be seen the first effort that was made to procure for an accused person a trial, — that is, in other words, to protect the subject from arbitrary imprisonment.

Yet so slow is the progress of civil liberty, that the first principles of the most obvious justice could not be secured till some centuries afterwards, by the proper fitting up of the writ of Habeas Corpus in the reign of *Charles the Second*.

The thirty-seventh clause runs thus: — "*Scutagium de cætero capiatur sicut capitebatur tempore regis Henrici avi nostri.*" And in the time of Henry the Second the scutage was moderate.

The important point of the levying of money was thus left in a very imperfect state. But in the confirmation of the charters by Edward the First, it was distinctly stated that no money should be levied upon the subject, except by the common assent of all the realm, and for the benefit of the whole realm.

The celebrated statute, "*De tallagio non concedendo*," is shown by Blackstone to be probably nothing more than a contemporary Latin abstract of the two French charters themselves, and not a statute.

The most striking clause of all, so well known, so often quoted, so justly celebrated, runs thus: — "*Nullus liber homo capiatur*," &c., &c., "*nisi per legale iudicium parium suorum vel per legem terræ*," &c., &c.

This twenty-ninth clause contains a general description of a free constitution. Dr. Sullivan, in his Lectures on the Laws of England, has made it the subject of a comment through all its words and divisions: that, in the first place, it secures the personal liberty of the subject; in the next, the full enjoyment of his property, &c., &c. And certainly, while the *spirit* of this clause is preserved, civil liberty must be enjoyed by Englishmen: whether, however, this spirit shall be preserved, depends upon their preserving *their own spirit*. The book of Dr. Sullivan is worth looking at. You may see from the contents what parts are more particularly deserving of your attention.

The Charter of the Forest speaks volumes to those who can reflect on what they read.

Observe the words of the tenth clause: — "*Nullus de cætero amittat vitam vel membrum pro venatione nostrâ. Sed si quis captus fuerit*," &c., &c., "*jaceat in prisonâ nostrâ per unum annum*," &c., &c. Offences in the forest must have been, before this time, often punished by the loss of life or limb, when murder was not.

Observe, too, the clauses which concede the restoration of whole tracts of land to their former state, — tracts which had been reduced to forests.

That the kings of these days, and no doubt their barons, should have been so interested in hunting as to be guilty, for the sake of it, not only of robbery and tyranny, but of maiming men and even putting them to death, is no slight proof of the value of those elegant arts and that more extended system of inquiry and knowledge, in consequence of which the manly exercises are left to fill their place, and not more than their place, in the circle of human anxieties and amusements.

Our game laws and our country gentlemen are the regular descendants of the forest laws and barons of ancient times. They are thought by many to bear some marks of their iron original.

In the fourth clause of Magna Charta are these words: — “Et hoc sine destructione et vasto (*waste*) hominum vel rerum”: that is, the laborers and the stock are summed up together; no distinction made between them.

The barons, the assertors of their own independence, though they felt for freemen and those below them, were but too insensible to the situation of the villeins, — to the heavy system of slavery which they saw, or rather did not see, darkening with its shade the fair fields of their domain.

In like manner were the English nation, in our own times, twenty years in abolishing the slave trade; and if the whole kingdom had been equally accustomed to the trade as were the ports of Bristol and Liverpool, they would have been twenty centuries.

The effect of *habit* in banishing all the natural feelings of mercy, justice, benevolence, as in the instances of slave-dealers, banditti, supporters of harsh laws, penal statutes against Dissenters, &c., &c., is perfectly frightful.

## VI.

THERE is a book by Daines Barrington, *Observations on the Ancient Statutes*, which should be considered. It is often descriptive of the manners of the times, of the views and opinions of our ancestors: it is even entertaining.

The conclusion which the student should draw is, the good that might be done, or might be at least most honorably and virtuously attempted, by any legislator or lawyer who would turn his attention to our statute-book, procure the repeal of obsolete statutes, endeavour to make our law proceedings less expensive, — in short, not acquiesce in the general supposition, that no improvements can be introduced into our laws and our administration of them. Much good might be done by patient, intelligent men; but the most sullen, and unenlightened, and unfeeling opposition must be more or less expected from our courts of law, and all who are connected with them.

“Truths would you teach, or save a sinking land,”

— that is, would you improve laws, and keep people from being ruined, —

“All fear, none aid you, and few understand.”

This note was written in the year 1808, and the author has since lived to see and admire the humane and intelligent efforts of Sir Samuel Romilly, Sir James Mackintosh, Mr. Peel, and Mr. Brougham.

## VII.

*Sir John Fortescue, Chancellor to Henry the Sixth.*

Two treatises of his have come down to us, that seem quite decisive of the question relative to our monarchy, as understood in early times, — whether arbitrary or not. The first is *De Laudibus Legum Angliæ*.

The distinction that the Chancellor everywhere makes is between “power royal and “power politique,” that is, arbitrary monarchy and limited; and he lays it down, that the kings of England are not like other kings and emperors, but are limited.

(Translation quite close and exact.)

Chap. 9th. “For the king of England cannot alter nor change the laws of his realm at his pleasure. For why? he governeth his people by power, not only royal, but also politique. If his power over them were royal only, then he might change the laws of his realm, and charge his subjects with tallage and other burdens without their consent; and such is the dominion that the civil laws purport, when they say, The prince his pleasure hath the force of a law. But from this much differeth the power of a king whose government over his people is politique, for he can neither change laws without the consent of his subjects, nor yet charge them with strange impositions against their wills,” &c., &c. — “Nam non potest rex Angliæ, ad libitum suum,” &c., &c.

In Chapter 18th, he observes: — “Sed non sic Angliæ statuta oriri possunt,” &c. “But statutes cannot thus pass in England, forso much as they are made not only by



the prince's pleasure, but also by the assent of the whole realm: so that of necessity they must procure the wealth of the people, &c., &c., seeing they are ordained not by the device of one man alone, or of a hundred wise counsellors only, but of more than three hundred chosen men, &c., &c., as they that know the fashion of the Parliament of England, and the order and manner of calling the same together, are able more distinctly to declare," &c., &c.

The young prince (Henry's son, Prince Edward), to whom the discourse is addressed, asks, — Since the laws of England are, as he sees, so good, why some of his progenitors have gone about to bring in the civil laws, &c.

In those laws, says the Chancellor, "the prince's pleasure standeth in force of a law: quite contrary to the decrees of the laws of England," &c., &c. But "to rule the people by government politique is no yoke, but liberty and great security, not only to the subjects, but also to the king himself." And to show this, the Chancellor considers "the inconveniences that happen in the realm of France through regal government alone." He then treats of "the commodities that proceed of the joint government politique and regal in the realm of England." Then, "a comparison of the worthiness of both the regiments."

The whole work is very concise, but full of curious matter.

### VIII.

#### *Original Insignificancy of the House of Commons.*

In the beginning of the reign of Richard the Second we find the following passage:—

"As to the aid the king demanded of his Commons for the defence, &c., &c., the Commons said, That in the last Parliament in his first year, the same things were shown unto them in behalf of the king, &c., &c.; that in hopes of the promise held out to them to be discharged of tallage for a great time after, they granted a greater sum than had been given to any king to be levied in so short a time, &c., &c.; and after their grievous losses, and the low value of their corn and other chattels, they concluded with praying the king to excuse them, not being able to bear any charge for pure poverty (*pur pure poverté*). To all which Monsieur Richard le Scrop" (who, it seems, was steward of the household) "answered, making protestation, That he knew of no such promise made in the last Parliament, and, saving the honor and reverence due to the king and lords, what the Commons said was not true (*le dit de la Comune en celle partie ne contient mye verité*)." This, at a time, when, if such language had been used by Monsieur le Scrop to the lords, the floor of the assembly would have been instantly covered with gauntlets.

When the feudal system declined, the power, which could not then be occupied by the Commons, (the nobility had been swept away by the civil wars), fell into the possession of the crown, a natural and constant claimant. The liberties of England were therefore in great danger, when princes so able as those of the house of Tudor were to be followed by princes so arbitrary as those of the house of Stuart.

The two great efforts of Henry the Seventh were, first, to destroy the power of the aristocracy; secondly, to amass treasures to render the crown independent: his ambition and avarice ministered to each other. But the first point he could not attempt to carry without advancing the power of the commons. He could not, for instance, open the way to the lords to alienate their lands, without giving the commons an opportunity of purchasing them, — that is, of turning their mercantile affluence into constitutional importance. The second point, however, was of a different nature. He could not amass the treasures which he wished, without encroaching upon the exclusive right of Parliament to levy money; and if the practices, pretences, and prerogatives, which he introduced, advanced, and renewed, had not been resisted by our ancestors in the time of Charles the First, the liberties of England must gradually have decayed.

Sir Thomas More, when young, resisted Henry the Seventh's demand from the Commons of about three fifteenths for the marriage of his daughter: the king actually threw More's father, then a judge, into the Tower, and fined him one hundred pounds. Had not the king died, Sir Thomas was determined to have gone over sea, thinking, "that, being in the king's indignation, he could not live in England without great danger." — See Roper's Life.

The Life of Henry the Seventh has been written by Lord Bacon. Such a man as Bacon can never write without profitably exercising, sometimes the understanding

sometimes the imagination of his reader; yet, on the whole, the work will disappoint him. The circumstances, indeed, in which Lord Bacon was placed, rendered it impossible for him to exercise the superior powers of his mind with any tolerable freedom. He wrote his History of Henry the Seventh during the period of his disgrace under the reign of James the First. It was not for Lord Bacon to reprobate the robberies of Henry the Seventh, when he had himself received money for the perversion of justice, or, at least, had been accused and disgraced for corrupt practices and connivances. It was not for Lord Bacon to assert, as he had once done, the popular principles of the English constitution, while writing under the eye of a monarch like James the First, one not only impressed with the divine nature of his prerogative, but one to whose humanity he owed his liberty at the time, and the very means of his subsistence. The faults of ordinary men may be buried in their tombs; but the very frailties of men of genius may be the lamentation of ages.

The laws of Henry the Seventh merit the consideration of the student. It was the intention of these laws to advance the husbandry, manufactures, and general commerce of the country. The observations of Lord Bacon, and the subsequent criticisms of Hume, will afford the student a lesson in that most difficult and important of all practical sciences, the science of political economy.

On the subjects that belong to this science, it may, I think, be observed, that, from the extent and variety of the points to be considered, the first impressions are almost always wrong. Practical men, as they are called, are therefore pretty generally mistaken on all such subjects; particularly where they think themselves exclusively entitled to decide. Practical men are fitted, *and fitted only*, to furnish facts and details, which it is afterwards the business, and the proper business, of the philosopher or statesman to make the foundation of his general reasonings and permanent laws.

So fallacious are first impressions, so remote and invisible is often the general principle that ought ultimately to decide us, that even the philosopher himself must, on such subjects, be much indebted to experience. Our ancestors could not be inferior in understanding to ourselves: who could be superior to Lord Bacon? Yet the laws of Henry the Seventh, which Lord Bacon extols, and which would appear wise, perhaps, to the generality of men at this day (1808), are shown by Mr. Hume to be founded on narrow views, and to be the very reverse of what Lord Bacon supposed them to be.

It is on account of Mr. Hume's observations on the subjects of political economy, that the appendices of his History are so valuable. Different portions of his work are likewise in this manner rendered valuable, more particularly the estimates which he gives of a reign when he comes to the close of it. Look at his account of the miscellaneous transactions, for instance, of Edward the Second. "The kingdom of England," says he, "was afflicted with a grievous famine," &c., &c. And then he goes on, in a few words, to lay down all the proper principles, which were afterwards so beautifully drawn out and explained by Adam Smith in his Dissertation on the Corn Laws, and which required all the authority of the minister, the late Mr. Pitt, to enforce upon the community, and even upon the houses of Parliament themselves, while men were everywhere raving about "monopolizers of corn," "the necessity of fixing proper rates to the price," &c., &c. This was the expedient of the Parliament of Edward the Second.

The necessities of the state during the wars that began in the year 1793 have brought the science of political economy into more general attention, and have served, very forcibly, to display the merits of the two great instructors of our English ministers and reasoners, Hume and Smith. The public, however, have still much to learn; and when our young men of rank and property have dismissed their academical pursuits, or rather whenever they have an opportunity, they should apply themselves to the study of political economy, the science of the prosperity of mankind, a study of all others the most interesting and important. A young man of reflection may find that the principles of political economy partake of the nature of literature, as described by Cicero, "moving along with him, let him go and do what he will, by night, by day, in the town, in the country," &c., &c.



## LECTURE VII.

1819.

## I.

It is many years since I drew up this lecture, and I now read with pleasure a note in Mr. Hallam's *Middle Ages*, when treating of the same period.

"I would advise," says he, "the historical student to acquaint himself with these transactions [the Flemish insurrections], and with the corresponding tumults at Paris. They are among the eternal lessons of history; for the unjust encroachments of courts, the intemperate passions of the multitude, the ambition of demagogues, the cruelty of victorious factions, will never cease to have their parallels and their analogies; while the military achievements of distant times afford, in general, no instruction, and can hardly occupy too little of our time in historical studies." — Page 91, chap. i. part 2.

Joinville and Froissart must be read for graphic representations of these and former times.

## II.

At the accession of Philip de Valois, the great fiefs of Burgundy, Flanders, and Brittany were all that had not, in some way or other, been connected with the crown.

## III.

THE great founder of the French monarchy was Philip Augustus. He wrested from the English their possessions, then amounting to a third of the kingdom.

## IV.

WHATEVER the feudal system lost seems, in France, to have been acquired by the monarchy. The independence and sovereignty of the barons insensibly declined; the jurisprudence of the country gradually passed into the courts of the sovereigns.

The States-General were occasionally assembled, and appear to have represented the weight and authority of the whole community. In this body were found, as a distinct part, the *commons*, the representatives of the cities and towns.

If the power that was flowing from the feudal system to the crown could have been in part intercepted by the courts of law and the assemblies of the nation, the result would have been a free and mixed constitution. Such was the result in England from beginnings not more promising.

A comparison of the different circumstances that operated upon the constitutions of the two countries should be made by the student, as he reads the history. The Abbé de Mably will be of great use; and two notes in Robertson. See his *Charles the Fifth*, notes 38, 39.

## V.

HISTORIANS, with the exception of Hume, are so ignorant of the modern science of political economy, — particularly all original historians, — that their narratives can be appealed to, on such subjects, only with the greatest circumspection. They state their facts, and generally add, without authority, such consequences as they conceive must of course have followed. Their relations are therefore filled with impossibilities.

## VI.

*French History.*

VELLY is the great historian of the early part of the annals of this great kingdom. Villaret continued the work; afterwards Garnier: it has not yet reached the more interesting parts of the French history. Villaret is considered by Baron Grimm (a very competent judge) as one of those few writers who have been able to continue a work

with more success than a successful predecessor. The work was paid by the volume, and probably thus rendered longer than necessary.

*Jacquerie.* — There is a short account of this insurrection given by Froissart; that is, some of the shocking facts are given. About the same time broke out the rising of the people under Wat Tyler. A more philosophic notice of these insurrections in France and England is taken by Hume.

In these cases the people seem in their *claims* (not in their *conduct*) to have been right: they were endeavouring to throw off the state of villeinage, or at least some of the oppressions of it. The subject, however, is of a general nature. The inequalities of condition, as they take place in society, have always appeared to the lower orders an intolerable injustice. From reasonable views and claims, they have often proceeded to those that were not reasonable; and the grossest doctrines of liberty and equality have often made their appearance, as they always will, when the minds of the vulgar are in a state of fermentation.

Yet it must be observed, that to men of refinement and sensibility, still more to men of sarcastic nature, the inequalities of condition seem so pregnant with evil, that the most affecting declamations, as in the works of Rousseau, have been produced by the contemplation of them; while, in Swift and others, they have given occasion to the most piercing invectives under different disguises.

In men of a more speculative turn (Godwin, for instance), they have urged men to the contrivance of political systems, and the most unreasonable impatience under every existing system. It cannot be doubted that from this source were derived most of the evils of the late French Revolution.

Metaphysical speculation, at least that sort of philosophy which hopes and presumes whatever it pleases of human nature, and has a calm and persevering logic for ever at hand, — such speculation and philosophy were never silenced *completely*, till the refutation of Godwin appeared in Mr. Malthus's first Essay on Population.

Books like Godwin's, harmless and almost ridiculous as they may be in ordinary times, are no longer so when the times are of a different description.

## VII.

### *Conquests in France, &c.*

SELF-ESTIMATION in a nation, as in an individual, is necessary to the virtue and dignity of the human character. But it is productive in each, sometimes of follies, sometimes of serious faults. It should be the result of slow and gradual inferences of the understanding, as much as possible; and not be, as it commonly is, a passion of the heart.

In a nation, as in an individual, it leads to irritable jealousy, unaccommodating and offensive haughtiness, selfishness, violence, injustice.

Its common direction is that of military glory; and as far as such a principle is necessary to national defence and independence, it is indispensably requisite to a virtuous people.

Far different has been its general operation, as seen in the history of mankind, as seen in the times of our Edwards and our Henries. The kings and heroes of our land were transformed into destroyers and oppressors.

## VIII.

THE work of De Lolme is too indiscriminate a panegyric on the English constitution. But his great position is, in the main, not unreasonable: That the difference of the constitutions of France and England is to be attributed to the original difference in the power of the crown, — to the power of the crown being *greater* in England.

In England, as the barons, however powerful, were far inferior to the king, a very large proportion of the whole landed property must have passed through the hands of William the Conqueror, and been granted on his own terms. They could not, therefore, struggle against the crown for their own liberties without assistance, and without struggling at the same time for those of their inferiors. The whole community was thrown into one scale.

There were many circumstances favorable to England, which the student must consider: he will find them in Millar, more particularly.

The scene of the contest was an island, where the influence of commerce was likely



to be soon felt, and the cities and towns become important. The necessity of a military force constantly ready to oppose invasion was not so pressing, and the excuse for a standing army not so plausible. England, being a country less extensive, did not so readily fall into great principalities; the union of the whole was more natural and immediate. The different parts of the Parliament could sympathize with each other; and the whole had thus a better chance to maintain its existence and authority.

The crown was not, as in France, transmitted from father to son for three centuries. Usurpations, disputed successions, &c., &c., were in England all favorable; for whatever induced or compelled the wearers of the crown to make use of the Parliaments was favorable.

This is the general principle; the detail may be seen in Millar; the particular situation of William Rufus, Henry the First, Stephen, &c., — all favorable to the existence and authority of the Parliaments. Even in the civil wars the Parliaments were appealed to by each party in its turn.

The danger, no doubt, was when the aristocracy had been consumed in the civil wars, and Henry the Seventh and Henry the Eighth had not only the opportunity, but the ability, to seize all the authority that seemed now left without an occupant, or rather, to enforce and extend all the natural authority of the crown, when there was nothing left to oppose it. But the Parliaments had *in the mean time got established*, and their authority had become identified in the minds of the community with the nature of all just and legitimate government.

The virtues as well as the vices of our kings tended, in a military age, to render them expensive; and neither their domains nor exactions could provide for their follies, in the one instance, or their ambition in the other. They had continually to summon Parliaments for fresh supplies. The nation was thus made wise (that is, jealous of the power of their princes) in the only way in which a nation can ever be made wise, by their own personal sufferings and inconveniences.

It must be confessed that the Parliaments were on one occasion or another guilty of every crime which they could commit against their country, but that of parting with the right of taxation. Reason, justice, humanity, they disposed of to the strongest; but in defence of their property they united the qualities of the fabled beings of antiquity, and had the eyes of Argus and the hands of Briareus.

The primitive House of Commons consisted of burgesses only. But the deputies from the counties, as being deputies, came in time to sit and deliberate along with them; and these deputies were interested in the taxes that were to be paid by the *landed gentry*. The great barons and peers were great landed proprietors also.

Tenths and fifteenths were taxes on private property, subsidies on *real* and personal property.

The great proprietors thus, fortunately, became interested in opposing the illegal expedients of the crown for raising money from the subject; and in the general management of the taxation of the community, no general assessment could be made without the concurrence of the representatives of every species of property.

The weaker house must have long derived considerable advantage from this connection and common interest with the House of Lords.

Nothing can be more amusing than to observe the language and feelings of terrified poverty with which the Commons approached their betters, as they would have been called, when money was wanted from them.

In France, though the national assemblies or States-General expired, they could not be obliterated from its history. Some vestiges of their power still survived: among others, the registering of the king's edicts, which descended to the Parliaments, — not analogous to our Parliaments, but legal bodies, who claimed the exercise of this power *in the absence*, that is, during the interval of the sittings, of the States-General.

Of this remnant of their power advantage was taken many centuries afterwards, in the late Revolution. So important are even the decayed forms of a free constitution; or rather, so much does and must always depend on the spirit of the community, and the *interpretation* which the same things receive, according as that spirit does or does not exist.

In Tacitus we see that the multitude took a part in the national councils. Even in these simple and rude times much difficulty and delay were the result. These assemblies, in the progress of society, came naturally to be composed of the great landed proprietors; afterwards of those who held benefices and fiefs. The common people were thus excluded. But when there arose in the community a new part of the population, which was neither vassal nor lord, nor came under any of the existing distine

tions, — still more, when a contrivance had presented itself (that of representation) by which the will of the people, or any free part of it, could be expressed as in the original assemblies, but without the original delay and difficulty, — it then became clear that an addition ought to be made to the existing national assemblies, whatever they might be, not only on grounds of civil expediency or natural right, but even of original *prescription*; that is, the people were now, through the medium of their representatives, to be readmitted.

Paragraphs are often to be found in Hume inconsistent with the *general effect* produced by his History. At the end of his reign of Edward the Third, he sums up his general estimate thus: — “A great prince rendered the monarchical power predominant. The weakness of a king gave reins to the aristocracy. A superstitious age saw the clergy triumphant. The people, for whom chiefly government was instituted, and who chiefly deserve consideration, were the weakest of the whole.” “*Naturam expellas furcâ,*” &c., &c. Hume, though a party writer, was still a man of humanity and good sense.

The following specimen may be given of the discordance that often exists between different historians, — between Rapin and Hume, for instance.

Mr. Hume, in his account of the deposition of Richard the Second, and of the articles of accusation exhibited against him, makes the following observation: — “There is, however, one circumstance in which his conduct is visibly different from that of his grandfather [Edward the Third]: He is not accused of having imposed one arbitrary tax, without consent of Parliament, during his whole reign.”

But on turning to the History of Rapin, the fifteenth article of the accusation of the Commons, as there exhibited, *expressly* charges Richard with illegal impositions, — “*Qu’il avoit imposé des taxes sur ses sujets de sa seule autorité.*”

The student is now desired to observe the extreme nicety which belongs to all investigations of this nature, and to all quotations of historians.

For another or second reader of history might now come and say, that *Rapin* had said nothing of the kind: that, on the contrary, the fifteenth article, as given by *Rapin* ran thus: —

“Art. 15. Whereas the kings of England used to live upon the revenues of the kingdom and patrimony of the crown in time of peace, without oppression of their people; that the same king, during his whole time, gave the greatest part of his revenue to unworthy persons, and imposed burdens upon his subjects, *granted as it were every year*, by which he excessively oppressed his people and impoverished his kingdom, not employing these goods to the advantage of the nation, but prodigally wasting them in ostentation, pomp, and glory; owing great sums for victuals and other necessities of his own house, though his revenues were greater than any of his progenitors.”

What is there here, the second student would say, of the king’s imposing taxes on his *own* authority?

And while these two students might stand, each quoting *Rapin*, and appealing to the very books they had perhaps seen not an hour before, another and a third reader of history might also come forward and say that the first student was right; that he had just read the fifteenth article in *Rapin’s* History, and that it was expressed as he had stated, and in the following words: — “That he had laid taxes upon his subjects by his own authority.”

What a perplexity and contradiction are here! Yet it would turn out, upon examination, that these three students or readers of history were, in a certain sense of the word, all right.

For the first had quoted the *folio* edition of *Rapin*, given in the *original French*.

The second had quoted the *folio* edition of *Rapin*, as *translated* by Tindal. But it happens, that Tindal very properly takes the trouble, on this occasion, not of translating *Rapin*, but of translating the original articles of accusation from the Rolls of Parliament; and the fifteenth article, when translated from the real original, gives not the words of *Rapin*, but runs to the length and exhibits the words, as presented by Tindal, “Whereas the kings of England,” &c., &c.

Finally, the third student might have been quoting the common *octavo* edition of *Rapin* in English, where the fifteenth article is not, as in Tindal’s *folio* translation, a translation of the original Roll of Parliament, but a mere translation of the *French* of *Rapin*, the French of the first *folio* edition, which is wrong, and *Rapin’s* own view of the case, — “*Qu’il avoit imposé des taxes de sa seule autorité.*”

Supposing now, therefore, that recourse was had, after the example of Tindal, to the only *real* authority, the Rolls of Parliament (they are published with the Journals, and



therefore easily accessible); and then the important words in the fifteenth article will be found to be these:—

“Non solum magnam, immo maximam partem dicti patrimonii sui donavit etiam personis indignis, verum etiam propterea *tot onera concessionis subditorum imposuit quasi annis singulis* in regno suo, quod valde et nimium excessive populum suum oppressit, in depauperationem regni sui,” &c., &c.

Now in these words, “*tot onera concessionis subditorum*,” &c., there is a sufficient obscurity to admit of a different interpretation by a Whig like Rapin, or a Tory like Hume, though the latter seems far more justified in his representation than the former; for it is the *prodigality* of the king, rather than the *illegality* of his conduct, that is evidently all throughout the articles the great burden of the accusation, — that he had wasted the money of the people of England, rather than that he had offended against their constitutional rights.

There is a History of Louis the Eleventh, by Duclos, a work that was much noticed in France; but it seems to be justly observed by a late French writer (Chamfort), that it is written in a spirit far too complaisant, very different from that with which the Memoirs of Louis the Fourteenth, &c., (by the same author,) are composed.

The fact is, that the philosophy of the history of this reign (Louis the Eleventh) cannot be found in the work of Duclos. It is said, indeed, that it was the object of the reign to break down the power of the great, and to keep them from tyrannizing over the people; which is probably what was said by Louis himself, for it is always said on such occasions. It is observed, too, that the royal authority has ever since been advancing by the motion which was impressed upon it by Louis the Eleventh. But the steps by which all this was done, and the consequences, are nowhere exhibited to the reader.

Duclos, before his History went to publication, had to receive the approbation of a licenser; and it was in vain, therefore, that he was competent both to write well and think well.

Philosophical instruction must be still gathered from Comines, whose omissions Duclos intended to supply, as well as to correct his mistakes; “though they are not commonly of great consequence,” he tells us. Duclos had all the facts before him, and he gives them.

Montesquieu is understood to have devoted much time to the subject; but there is a strange story of his losing his manuscripts by an accident, and of his then abandoning all further thoughts of the work.

Philip de Comines is the author read. Much of his work, particularly the latter part of it, should be read. The important features of it are the fate of the house of Burgundy, and the unjust encroachments of Louis the Eleventh on the dominions of his neighbours and the constitution of his country.

Comines came not into the service of Louis till he had been twelve years on the throne.

It cannot be now understood by what felicity of original temperament, or by what influence of reflection, the historian himself could be a lover of the people and a lover of virtue, though a courtier from his infancy, the servant of the most base and selfish of princes, and living in habits of business and society with many of the most licentious and unprincipled of men.

“Is there any king,” he says, “or prince upon earth who has power to raise one penny of money, except on his demesnes, without the consent of the poor subject who is to pay it, but by tyranny and violence?”

“King Charles the Seventh,” he says, in another place, “has laid a great load both upon his own and the souls of his successors, and given his kingdom a wound which will bleed a long time; and that was, by establishing a standing army.”

The manners of these dreadful times in France, during the factions of the houses of Orleans and Burgundy, and the reign of Louis the Eleventh, may be seen in Brantôme and more conveniently in Wraxall’s Memoirs of the House of Valois.

## LECTURES IX., X.

## I.

CALVIN, in his letter to the Protector Somerset, observes, after describing two sorts of troublesome people, Gospellers and Papists (probably), that both the one and the other ought to have the sword drawn upon them. "Alii cerebrosi, sub Evangelii nomine; alii in superstitionibus Antichristi ita obduraverunt," &c. Of these he declares, — "Merentur quidem tum hi, tum illi, gladio ultore coerceri, quem tibi tradidit Dominus." — Page 67 of Calvin's Epistles, Geneva edit. 1575. See Collier's Church History, Part.ii. b. 4, page 284, edit. 1714.

Bucer, writing to Calvin, says, — "At quomodo Serveto lernæ hæreseôn et pertinacissimo homini parci potuerit, non video." — Vide same edition of Calvin's Epistles, page 147.

## II.

*Intolerance.* Written in 1810.

It is generally supposed that it was only the bloody Queen Mary and Bishop Bonner who put people to death on account of their religious opinions, — that the Protestants were incapable of such enormities.

This is not so, and Protestants should know it. Many were put to death in the time of the brutal Henry the Eighth. But there were some even in the time of Edward the Sixth, though not for Popery; more than one hundred and sixty of the Roman Catholic communion in the time of Elizabeth; sixteen or seventeen in the time of James the First; and more than twenty by the Presbyterians and Republicans. These are the facts.

Arians and Anabaptists, for instance, were, some of them, actually burned. Puritans and sectarians were, some of them, hanged. These seem instances of direct and distinct intolerance.

But with regard to others, sanguinary penal laws were made, and Papists executed under them, on supposed principles of state necessity. It remains, then, to be considered how far this state necessity existed.

Some of the particulars may be noted briefly hereafter, and they may serve to put good men on their guard against the workings of their own nature on all subjects connected with their religious opinions. But in the first place, in page 398 of Fuller's Church History, the text of King Edward's Diary is given. "May 2nd, 1550. — Joane Bocher, otherwise called Joane of Kent, was burnt for holding that Christ was not incarnate of the Virgin Mary, being condemned the year before," &c. This is the text. Fuller himself writes *a century afterwards*, and his comment is this: — "An obstinate heretic, maintaining, &c., &c. She, with one or two Arians, were all who (and that justly) died in this king's reign, for their opinions." — "And that justly"! says Fuller.

In Heylin's Church History, pages 88 and 89, may be seen the particulars of this horrible transaction. Cranmer and Ridley were unhappily distinguished in it. The king was averse, and said Cranmer must be answerable to God, if he (the king) signed the death-warrant.

George Paris was burned for Arianism on the 25th of April following, 1551.

A further reference may be made to cases where no plea of state necessity could have been urged. Observe the conduct of Elizabeth and her advisers, or rather of Elizabeth, the daughter of Henry the Eighth.

In page 549 of Collier's History, Volume ii., an account is given of the Anabaptists, taken from Stow. A conventicle had been discovered; twenty-seven seized; four were recovered, and brought to a recantation. The "damnable and detestable heresies" which they recanted were these: — "1. That Christ took not flesh of the substance of the blessed Virgin Mary. 2. That infants born of faithful parents ought to be re-baptized. 3. That no Christian man ought to be a magistrate, or bear the sword or office of authority. 4. And that it is not lawful for a Christian man to take an oath."

Ten Dutchmen and one woman were brought into the consistory at St. Paul's, and condemned to the stake. The woman was recovered, and the government "was so merciful" as to banish the rest. This clemency giving encouragement, two of the



same nation and heterodoxies were burned in Smithfield. Fox, the martyrologist, wrote a letter to the queen in their behalf, "to mitigate the rigor," "to change the punishment," "to respite the execution for a month or two, that learned men might bring them off their heresy." A reprieve was granted; Fox's expedient tried without success; and they were therefore burned. The above account is abridged and given in the words of Collier.

In Fuller's Church History, to which he refers, Book IX., page 104, edit. 1655, Fox's letter is given; it does him the highest honor, all circumstances considered; it is temperate, conciliating, humane; in a word, it is Christian. He observes, — "Erroribus quidem ipsis nihil possit absurdius esse, &c.; sed ita habet humanæ infirmitatis conditio, si divinâ paululum luce destituti nobis relinquimur, quo non ruimus præcipientes?" "Istas sectas, &c., idoneâ comprimendas correctione censeo. Verum enim vero ignibus ac flammis pice ac sulphure æstantibus viva miserorum corpora torrefacere iudicii magis cæcitate quam impetu voluntatis errantium, durum istud ac Romani magis exempli esse quam Evangelicæ consuetudinis videtur," &c., &c. "Quamobrem, &c., supplex pro Christo rogam, &c., ut vitæ, &c., miserorum parcatur, saltem ut horri obistatur, atque in aliud quodeunque commutetur supplicii genus. Sunt ejectiones, &c., sunt vincula, &c., &c., ne piras ac flammæ Smithfieldianas, &c., &c., sinas nunc recandescere."

The words that follow in Fuller are these (Fuller wrote in the time of the Commonwealth, and was a member of the Church of England): — "This letter was written by Mr. John Fox (from whose own hand I transcribed it), very loath that Smithfield, formerly consecrated with martyrs' ashes, should now be profaned with heretics', and desirous that the Papists might enjoy their own monopoly of cruelty in burning condemned persons. But though Queen Elizabeth constantly called him her Father Fox, yet herein was she no dutiful daughter, giving him a flat denial. Indeed damnable were their impieties, and she necessitated to this severity, who having formerly punished some traitors, if now sparing these blasphemers, the world would condemn her, as being more earnest in asserting her own safety than God's honor. Hereupon the writ *De hæretico comburendo* (which for seventeen years had hung only up in terror) was now taken down and put in execution, and the two Anabaptists burned in Smithfield died in great horror with crying and roaring."

It may not be amiss to exhibit for perusal this horrible writ. William Sawtre was the first victim, in the time of Henry the Fourth, 1401.

FORM of the Writ *De Hæretico Comburendo*, from Fitzherbert's *Natura Brevium*, 2d Vol. p. 269, ninth edition.

"The king, &c., to the mayor and sheriffs of London, greeting: Whereas the venerable father Thomas archbishop of Canterbury, primate of all England, and legate of the apostolic see, with the consent and assent of the bishops and his brothers the suffragans, and also of the whole clergy of his province in his provincial council assembled, the orders of law in this behalf requisite being in all things observed, by his definitive sentence pronounced and declared *William Sawtre* (sometime chaplain, condemned for heresy, and by him the said William heretofore in form of law abjured, and him the said William relapsed into the said heresy) a manifest heretic, and decreed him to be degraded, and hath for that cause really degraded him, from all clerical prerogative and privilege, and hath decreed him the said William to be left, and hath really left him, to the secular court, according to the laws and canonical sanctions set forth in this behalf, and holy mother the Church hath nothing further to do in the premises: we therefore, being zealous for justice, and a lover of the Catholic Faith, willing to maintain and defend holy Church, and the rights and liberties thereof, and (as much as in us lies) to extirpate by the roots such heresies and errors out of our kingdom of England, and to punish heretics so convicted with condign punishment; and being mindful that such heretics convicted in form aforesaid, and condemned according to the law divine and human by canonical institution, and in this behalf accustomed, ought to be burnt with a burning flame of fire, command you, most strictly as we can firmly enjoining, that you commit to the fire the aforesaid William, being in your custody, in some public and open place within the liberties of the city aforesaid, before the people publicly, by reason of the premises, and cause him really to be burnt in the same fire, in detestation of this crime, and to the manifest example of other Christians: and this you are by no means to omit, under the peril falling thereon. Witness." &c.

This writ was used nearly word for word by Elizabeth, when she put to death the

two Anabaptists in the seventeenth or eighteenth year of her reign. The writ may be readily seen by turning to Collier's Church History, in the fifteenth page of the preface to the second folio volume, edition 1714. This Protestant princess could sign the following dreadful words:—

"Nos igitur, ut zelator justitiæ, et fidei Catholicæ defensor, volentesque Ecclesiam sanctam ac jura et libertates ejusdem et fidem Catholicam manu tenere et defendere, ac hujusmodi hæreses et errores ubique (quantum in nobis est) eradicare et extirpare, ac hæreticos sic convictos animadversione condignâ puniri, attendentesque hujusmodi hæreticos in formâ prædictâ convictos et damnatos, juxta leges et consuetudines regni nostri Angliæ in hac parte consuetas, *ignis incendio comburi debere*: Vobis præcipimus quod dictos Johannem Peters et Henricum Turwert, in custodiâ vestrâ existentes, apud West Smithfield in loco publico et aperto, ex causâ præmissâ, *coram populo igni committi*, ac ipsos Johannem Peters et Henricum Turwert in eodem igne *realiter comburi* faciatis, *in hujusmodi criminis detestationem*, aliorumque hominum exemplum, ne in simile crimen labantur, et hoc sub periculo incumbenti nullatenus omittatis.

"Teste reginâ apud Gorambury decimo quinto die Julii.

"Per ipsam reginam.

"ELIZABETH."

Such are the facts. There is here no terror of Papists, — of men intending by mobs to overthrow the government. The case is simply a case of intolerance; and thus, though every consideration, that should have influenced the understanding and affected the feelings of Elizabeth and her counsellors, had been urged by Fox in the most unobtrusive and respectful manner, "In igne realiter comburi faciatis," says the writ, "in hujusmodi criminis detestationem."

It is therefore impossible to impute the violent and sanguinary laws and executions of this reign to mere motives of state policy. The Roman Catholic writers do not make this mistake. Yet they do in their own instance. Father Parsons, in his Reply to Fox, "made it appear," as he supposed, "that many of them [the Protestant martyrs] died for treason; some were notoriously scandalous and wicked persons; others distracted, and no better than enthusiasts," &c., &c. These are his excuses. — Dodd's Church History, page 463.

Observe now what these penal laws were, and what the horrible consequences.

Elizabeth comes to the throne in 1558. In the fifth year of her reign she asserts her supremacy; it was made death to deny *twice* this supremacy. Now this supremacy of the Pope is a point of religious faith with the Roman Catholics; Bishop Fisher and Sir Thomas More, as she and her Parliaments knew, died for it. No effort was made to disentangle the *civil* obligations due to the sovereign from the *religious* obligation due to the Pope, as the head of the Roman Catholic Church, and the supposed immediate descendant and representative and vicegerent of Christ here on earth.

On this account, from 1571 to 1594, were put to death twelve persons, seven gentlemen and five clergymen. Their names are given, page 320, part iv. b. 3, vol. ii., of Dodd's Church History. Dodd is the Roman Catholic historian.

In the thirteenth year of her reign, 1570, the bringing in of the Pope's bulls, or *other superstitious things*, was made death. In the twenty-third year it was made death to withdraw any from the established religion, it was also made death to be so persuaded or withdrawn. In the twenty-seventh year, 1585, Jesuits, seminary priests, and other such, were ordered out of the kingdom, and, if remaining in the realm, were to be punished with death, as were even those who harboured them.

The result of acts like these was, that from 1581 to 1603 no less than one hundred and twenty of the secular clergy were put to death for exercising their sacerdotal functions as Roman Catholics. Their names are given in Dodd, page 321. Twenty-four suffered in the year 1588, the year of the Spanish invasion. Sixty of them, after that year, when all danger was at an end, and even the plea of state necessity no longer existed.

Thirty-three different persons were put to death for entertaining and assisting priests of the Roman communion, yeomen and gentlemen. Twelve for being reconciled to the Roman communion. The names of all these appear in Dodd, pages 321, 322, 323. Three Jesuits also suffered for exercising their sacerdotal functions. Forty priests were banished in 1585, after having been condemned. Twenty (clergymen, gentlemen, and Jesuits) were condemned, and were either pardoned or died in prison, from the year 1581 to 1600. Their names are given.

That is, on the whole, more than one hundred and sixty persons were put to death in the reign of Queen Elizabeth, for being priests, or for acting as priests; for harbouring priests; for converting, or being converted: lastly, for denying the supremacy



In May, 1579, Matthew Hammond, having first lost his ears for opprobrious language to the queen, was burned for blasphemy and heresy at Norwich. In 1583, Elias Thacker and John Copping, Brownists, were hanged at Bury. John Lewes was burned at Norwich. These and others are clear cases of religious intolerance.

The sanguinary and violent laws enacted in this reign, and not only enacted, but put into execution, are excused upon the plea of state necessity, — the tyrant's plea at all times, and not sufficient; though these times, and Elizabeth's situation, were, no doubt, very peculiar. The Roman Catholics in Mary's reign, Bonner in particular, had excuses (such as they were) always ready, and talked of retaliation, though they were not burned at Smithfield as the Protestants were.

The Protestants insisted that theirs was the true faith; the Papists, that theirs was not only the true, but the ancient faith; and in justice even to the Roman Catholics, bigoted and bloody as they were, it should be remembered that the Protestants were the assailants, that they were the innovators, the disturbers, the propagators of new opinions, &c.

The Roman Catholics could always say to the Protestants, "Christ left his church behind him. What church but ours? Did not the church which Christ left begin to exist till the days of your Luther?" Such was their plausible language.

But the subject of toleration was not understood. The offences of each party may be compared, and the atrocities of the one may be more tremendous than the cruelties of the other; — they certainly were. The guilt, however, of putting to death their fellow-creatures must be shared by both, and should, though in different degrees and to a different extent, be an eternal warning to ourselves of the original tendencies of the human mind on these subjects.

"What could be more provoking to the court," says Collier (a nonjuror, but a Protestant), "than to see the queen's honor [Queen Mary's] aspersed, their religion insulted, their preachers shot at in the pulpit, and a lewd imposture played against the government? Had the reformed been more smooth and inoffensive in their behaviour, had the eminent clergy of that party published an abhorrence of such unwarrantable methods, it is possible, some may say, they might have met with gentler usage, and prevented the persecution from flaming out." — Collier, Part ii., b. 5, page 371.

"The governors of the Church," says Heylin (a Protestant writer also), "exasperated by these provocations, and the queen [Mary] charging Wyatt's rebellion on the Protestant party, they both agreed on the reviving of some ancient statutes, made in the time of King Richard the Second, Henry the Fourth, and Henry the Fifth, for the severe punishment of obstinate heretics, even to death itself." — Heylin, page 47.

"The heretics themselves," said Bonner, "put one of their own number [Servetus] to a cruel death. Is it a crime in us, if we proceed against them with the like severity?" — Heylin, page 48.

"Heretics themselves," one of the Catholic tracts observed, "did not scruple burning Dissenters, when the government was on their side. Some Arians and Anabaptists, condemned to the fire by the Protestants, were no less remarkable for the regularity of their lives," &c., &c. — Collier, page 383.

The truth is, no pleas of state policy, reprisals, &c., &c., are to be listened to. Intolerance is at the bottom of all such proceedings, — intolerance, more or less, from the bloody writs of our ancestors, and their abominable fires in Smithfield, down to our own penal or disabling statutes against Dissenters or Roman Catholics, in England or Ireland.

James the First died in March, 1625; became king in 1603. In 1612, Francis Latham, a Roman Catholic, was executed on account of the supremacy. He distinguished clearly between the civil obedience which he owed James, his king, and the obedience which he owed his spiritual sovereign, the Pope; but in vain. He was hanged at Tyburn, December 5. The particulars of his examination and execution are instructive, but very disgraceful to the Bishop of London (King) and the government. They are given, page 369 of Dodd's second volume.

N. Owen, a gentleman of good account, was long confined in prison, and at last condemned to die, for refusing the oaths of allegiance and supremacy. He suffered May 17, 1615. — Dodd, page 427.

William Brown suffered at York in 1605, "for being instrumental in proselyting the king's subjects to the Roman communion." — Dodd, page 431.

Robert Drury, Matthew Fletcher, and twelve or thirteen others, were put to death on different accounts connected with their sacerdotal functions. — Dodd's Church History, page 525; and his references, 377, &c.: vide the Index.

During the reign of Charles the First, and the time of the Rebellion, on account of their sacerdotal character, two suffered in 1628, one in 1634, one in 1641, six in 1642, two in 1643, three in 1644, one in 1645, four in 1646 and 1651, and two in 1654. — Vide Dodd, Vol. iii. page 172.

These facts are very disgraceful to the Presbyterians and Republicans. Charles would not have put Roman Catholics to death on account of their religion; it is therefore the Commons who must be responsible for these enormities.

Charles the Second. — At page 356, &c., of Dodd, there are several very affecting speeches of those who suffered for Oates's plot. About seventeen were executed on account of it, most disgracefully.

Nicholas Postgate, and seven others, suffered on account of orders in 1679. Fourteen others were condemned, but reprieved and pardoned.

These horrible executions and condemnations must have been more or less occasioned by the insanity of the nation on the subject of Popish plots, more particularly Oates's plot. They show the nature, not only of intolerance, but of public alarms, popular cries, &c., &c.

The case of the Covenanters might next be referred to, — one, surely, of intolerance exercised by the more powerful sect.

Judge Blackstone, in his 4th book, chap. 4, states the laws that so long remained in force against the Papists. "Of which," says he, "the President Montesquieu observes, that they are so rigorous, though not professedly of the sanguinary kind, that they do all the hurt that can possibly be done in cold blood. But in answer to this," says Blackstone, "it may be observed that these laws are seldom exerted to their utmost rigor; and indeed, if they were, it would be very difficult to excuse them. For they are rather to be accounted for from their history, and the urgency of the times which produced them, than to be approved, upon a cool review, as a standing system of law." This account and history of them he then gives, and at last ventures to say, that, "if a time should ever arrive, and perhaps it is not very distant" (this was written between the years 1755 and 1765), "when all fears of a Pretender shall have vanished," &c., &c., "it probably would not then be amiss to review and soften these rigorous edicts," &c.

The present reign (of George the Third) has been a reign of concession, that is, a reign of progressive civil wisdom and progressive religious knowledge on these subjects. The question is at length debated, among all reasonable men, as properly a question of civil policy. The nature of religious truth and the rights of religious inquiry are better understood than they were by our ancestors. These are held sacred, in theory at least. And therefore all that now remains to be observed is, that no real conversions can be expected to take place, while penal statutes or test acts exist; because, while these exist, the point of honor is against the conversion.

The members of the Roman Catholic or Dissenting communions will gradually become more and more like the members of any more enlightened establishment, in their views and opinions, when civil offices and distinctions are first laid open to them, but in no other way. Those of them who are of some condition or rank in life, or of superior natural talents, will *first* suffer this alteration in their views and opinions; then successful merchants and manufacturers; — and this sort of improvement will propagate downward. At length the clerical part will be gradually improved in their views and opinions, like the laity. The outward and visible signs of the worship of the Roman Catholic or Dissenting communion may alter, or may in the mean time remain the same; but the alteration in their minds and tempers will have taken place, sufficiently for all civil purposes, gradually, insensibly, and with or without acknowledgment or alteration in their creeds and doctrines. This is the only conversion that can now be thought of: an alteration, this, not of a day or a year, but to be produced in a course of years, by the unrestrained operation of the increasing knowledge and prosperity of mankind. Nothing *could* have kept the inferior and more ignorant sects and churches from gradually assimilating themselves to the superior and more enlightened communion, in the course of the last half-century, *but* tests and penal statutes, and all the various machinery of exclusion and proscription.

But neither on the one side nor the other are the spiritual pastors and teachers to be at all listened to in these discussions. What is reasonable is to be done, to be done from time to time, and the event need not be feared. Statesmen will never advance the civil and religious interests of the community, if they are to wait till they can settle, in any manner satisfactory to the Dissenting teacher and the Established Churchman, to the Roman Catholic and to the Protestant minister, their opposite and long-established claims and opinions, — claims and opinions from which it is the business



of the statesman, as much as possible, to escape. I am speaking now of men as rulers of kingdoms, not as individuals; such men are not to take their own views of religious truth for granted, and propagate it accordingly; the state would thus necessarily be made intolerant.

"To overthrow any religion," says Montesquieu, (or, he might have added, any particular sect in religion,) "we must assail it by the good things of the world and by the hopes of fortune; not by that which makes men remember it, but by that which causes them to forget it; not by that which outrages mankind, but by every thing which soothes them, and facilitates the other passions of humanity in obtaining predominance over religion."

These notes were written in the year 1810, and placed on the table when the two lectures on the Reformation were delivered. Mr. Hallam published his History nearly twenty years after. He very thoroughly discusses the subject of the statutes of Elizabeth's reign, and then sums up in the following words:—"It is much to be regretted that any writers worthy of respect should, either through undue prejudice against an adverse religion, or through timid acquiescence in whatever has been enacted, have offered for this odious code the false pretext of political necessity. That necessity, I am persuaded, can never be made out. The statutes were, in many instances, absolutely unjust; in others, not demanded by circumstances; in almost all, prompted by religious bigotry, by excessive apprehension, or by the arbitrary spirit with which our government was administered under Elizabeth."—End of 3d chap. of his Constitutional History, pages 229 and 230 of 8vo edit. of 1829.

At the end of the fourth chapter he observes, speaking of the Puritans:—"After forty years of constantly aggravated molestation of the Nonconforming clergy, their numbers were become greater, their popularity more deeply rooted, their enmity to the established order more irreconcilable." He acknowledges the difficulty of the case, but observes "that the obstinacy of bold and sincere men is not to be quelled by any punishments that do not exterminate them, and that they were not likely to entertain a less conceit of their own reason when they found no arguments so much relied on to refute it as that of force. Statesmen invariably take a better view of such questions than churchmen." "It appears by no means unlikely, that, by reforming the abuses and corruption of the spiritual courts, by abandoning a part of their jurisdiction, so heterogeneous and so unduly obtained, by abrogating obnoxious and at best frivolous ceremonies, by restraining pluralities of benefices, by ceasing to discountenance the most diligent ministers, and by more temper and disinterestedness in their own behaviour, the bishops would have palliated, to an indefinite degree, that dissatisfaction with the established scheme of polity which its want of resemblance to that of other Protestant churches must more or less have produced. Such a reformation would at least have contented those reasonable and moderate persons who occupy sometimes a more extensive ground between contending factions than the zealots of either are willing to believe or acknowledge."

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## LECTURE XII.

### I.

#### *The Edict of Nantes.*

THE remonstrances of the Protestants were vain on the subject of tithes. But the king, by a brief, promised to furnish them annually with a certain sum, "to be employed," says the brief, "in certain secret affairs relating to them, which his Majesty does not think fit to specify or declare." They were also allowed (but by the secret articles) to receive gifts and legacies.\* They were indulged, too, (twenty-second article,) in being eligible to offices in the universities,† and in sending their children freely to the public schools.

\* That is, for the support of their religion: "Pour l'entretien des Ministres, Docteurs, Ecoliers et pauvres de ladite Religion pretendue Reformée, et autres causes pies." Art. XLII. — N.

† A mistake. Neither the twenty-second article, nor any other part of the Edict, or of the secret articles accompanying it, contains any provision making Protestants "eligible to offices in the uni-

But so much more is necessary to the weaker sect than edicts or laws in their favor, that this very concession was afterwards made a pretext for preventing Protestants from teaching any thing in their own small schools but reading and arithmetic, "because," said the Roman Catholics, "the children may be sent to our public colleges."

Three Parliaments or courts of law were fixed upon, where the number of Protestant and Roman Catholic judges were to be equal: a necessary arrangement, it seems, to procure them the proper protection of the law.

Protestant books were to be sold only where the religion was publicly exercised; in other places, after an *imprimatur*; not in the metropolis, for instance.

## II.

### *Low Countries.*

FROM the termination of the great struggle between the Low Countries and Philip the Second, inferences have been drawn more favorable to the practicability of resistance to oppression than the transactions, it is to be feared, will warrant. Of the seventeen provinces, though the condition of all must have been much ameliorated, seven only were emancipated from the Spanish yoke. They who have to resist the regular armies of their tyrants can seldom be so situated as were the inhabitants of these maritime provinces; they can seldom be possessed of such fortified towns, and of a country so singularly impracticable to invaders. It is seldom that they can have a marine so powerful, and the commerce and the possessions, the very treasures of their oppressors, so exposed to insult and injury, to capture and ruin. It is seldom that an unhappy people can be found so justly infuriated and rendered so totally desperate by their particular sufferings and their particular cause; it is seldom that they can have been so fortunately educated, as were the Hollanders, to a sense of right, by the prior influence of a free government.

Yet the policy of the case, as it respects the tyrant himself, or the superior country, is not altered. The oppressed country will always find support from the neighbouring powers; great mistakes, like those of Philip, will probably be made; illustrious defenders of their country will probably arise, produced by the occasion. Injury must at all events be received by the superior power. The most successful issue will but turn subjects into slaves, brothers into enemies; and impair those principles of dignified obedience and reciprocal right between the governors and the governed, which externally and internally, in the superior as well as the dependent state, are the only steady and effective causes of all real greatness and prosperity.

The student is again recommended to turn to the debate in the Spanish council, given by Bentivoglio, on account of the similarity of the reasonings employed by our own statesmen in the contest with our American colonies.

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## LECTURES XVIII., XIX.

1810.

### I.

CLARENDON relates of Charles the Second, that he came to him one day, when they were both together in exile, and asked him, with some astonishment, whether the penal statutes against the Catholics in England could possibly be such as they had been represented to him in conversation. The Chancellor was obliged to confess to him that they really were, and to endeavour to explain to him how and why penal statutes of this nature had been made. But it is probable that the humanity of the young king, not trained up under the discipline of polemical warfare, received an impression

versities." The language of the article referred to is as follows:—"XXII. Ordonnons qu'il ne sera fait difference ne distinction, pour le regard de ladite Religion, à recevoir les Ecoliers pour être instruits és Universitez, Colleges et Ecoles, et les malades et pauvres és Hôpitaux, Maladeries et aumônes publiques." *Histoire de l'Edit de Nantes*, [par Elie Benoit,] (Delft, 1693,) Tom. i., Recueil d'Edits, etc. p. 68.—N.



in favor of the Roman Catholics, careless as he was, which could never afterwards be removed. It is at the same time to be observed, that Charles was totally incapable of all severer virtue, and therefore that he recoiled from any description of religion which insisted on the purity of the heart and the triumphs of self-denial; yet was his understanding too penetrating to leave him undisturbed in the indulgence of his vices. He was therefore placed, as sometimes happens, within the reach of the two extremes of infidelity and superstition; and in his hours of gayety believing nothing, and believing every thing, on the contrary, during those cold visitations of melancholy to which men of pleasure are so peculiarly exposed, he was, from the first, a fit subject for the influence of the ceremonies and pretensions of the Roman Catholic Church. And from these and other considerations, it may be concluded that he came to England, and remained to his death, perfectly disposed to extend every kindness to the members of a Church, with the sentiments, at least, of whose religion he could sympathize, and to whose communion, therefore, (for religious inquiry into doctrines was out of the question,) he must have appeared to himself to belong.

The king, therefore, and the Roman Catholics, saw with pleasure the Presbyterians totally excluded from the Establishment, because they conceived, that, the greater were the numbers of those without the pale, the better would be their treatment; and that the Papists might thus come in with the rest to partake of the benefits of some general act of toleration.

The Presbyterians, on the contrary, intolerant to a degree that would be perfectly ludicrous, if it were not for the serious nature of the subject, though they were extremely exasperated when they found themselves so abhorred by the Church of England, could cordially unite with that Church in at least equally abominating those of the Roman Catholic communion.

The Church, in the mean time, had perfectly resolved to avoid all fellowship with either. As, however, beneath the lowest deep there was yet a lower deep, they were always ready to accept the services of the Presbyterians against their common enemy, the Roman Catholics; so that in this respect the Church and the Presbyterians were united. But still further to perplex the scene, the Church of England had, like the Church of Rome, adopted the tenet of passive obedience, and was thus politically united with the Roman Catholics; and therefore in this manner both were combined against the Presbyterians.

After all the contests, therefore, which had taken place between the Papists and Protestants, and between the different sects of the Protestants, and after so many years of civil and religious dispute, the prospect was still heavy with clouds; the civil and religious liberties of the country were still in a situation of trial and uncertainty; and they might have been for ever destroyed by the entire success of any one of the great parties of the state, or even of some of their particular combinations.

## II.

IN the debates of the two houses the secret history of the times cannot now be discovered, but the proceedings of Parliament during the whole of this reign seldom cease to be important.

Among other of their acts may be mentioned the Habeas Corpus Act. The nature of it must be examined in Blackstone and our constitutional writers, and the conclusion to be drawn from the whole of the case seems to be the extreme difficulty with which the liberty of the subject can be secured; the endless train of impediments which they who administer the laws can, if they please, and will, if they are not prevented, throw in the way of the proper execution of them; and, on the whole, a new instance to show how vain is the letter of the law, unless a proper sense of propriety and right is generated by the constitution through the great mass of the community.

It might have been thought, that, before this celebrated act, enough had been done for the freedom of the subject; but not so: and an act like this, which only gives the subject, when thrown into prison, a power of asking the reason of his commitment, such an act was declared by the Duke of York to be inconsistent with the existence of all regular government; though the very contrary seems the fact; for without it the liberty of no man is secure; and the law is easily suspended, whenever the critical situation of the country renders it necessary. "Nemo imprisonetur nisi,"\* &c., said the

\* The language of Magna Charta is, "*Nullus liber homo capiatur vel imprisonetur, &c., nisi per legalem iudicium parium suorum vel per legem terre.*" 17 John, § 39; 1 Hen. III., § 32; 2 Hen. III., § 35 § Hen. III., § 29. The Great Charter, &c., ed. Blackstone (Oxford, 1759). — N.

barons in Magna Charta; but it was not till the time of this act that their great principle was ever perfectly exhibited in practice.

The very remarkable provision of law, called the Test Act, was the consequence of the very singular times of Charles the Second, — times when the reigning monarch was believed to be in a conspiracy against his subjects, and the immediate heir to the crown an enemy to their religion. By this act all were excluded from civil offices who took not the sacrament "according to the usage of the Church of England." And this religious part of the test was contrived as the only expedient for incapacitating the Papists, against whom the act was directed. The intention of the legislature was considerably answered. The Duke of York and other conscientious Roman Catholics resigned their posts, though unprincipled men probably retained them. But another consequence followed, which was not within the intention of the legislature: the Dissenters, as well as the Papists, agreed not with the Church of England in their manner of taking the sacrament; and the act has ever since operated to their exclusion from offices as completely as if they had been the objects against whom it was originally levelled. "Great pains," says Burnet, "was taken by the court to divert this bill. They proposed that some regard might be had to Protestant Dissenters, and that their meetings might be allowed. By this means they hoped to have set them and the Church party into new heats; for now all were united against Popery. Love, who served for the city of London, and was himself a Dissenter, saw what ill effects any such quarrels might have; so he moved that an effectual security might be found against Popery, and that nothing might interpose till that was done: when that was over, then they would try to deserve some favor; but at present they were willing to lie under the severity of the laws, rather than clog a more necessary work with their concerns." — Burnet, Vol. i. p. 347.

The conduct of the Dissenters seems to have got them great reputation. But whenever a penal statute is to be drawn up, its enactments should be very strictly limited, and the future consequences of it be well considered. The Commons had provided by their Test Act for their own defence; but the bill which they afterwards brought in, and which they passed for the ease of the Dissenters, suffered amendments in the House of Lords; and the Parliament was adjourned before these proposed alterations could be adjusted. In point of fact, it never afterwards became a law. The truth is, that the Commons should have provided for the case of the Dissenters in their original bill; or, if that might have delayed its enactment, should at all events have insisted subsequently on justice being done. What they themselves neglected to do no subsequent legislature ever did; and the Dissenters at this moment find their feelings wounded, and the fair range of their talents confined, by an act of exclusion originally passed with the concurrence and coöperation of their own body.

It is not in matters of government, as in other concerns, that a law or any political regulation may be put aside when its object has been accomplished. Such are the passions of mankind, that laws are seldom, nor can they always with safety be, either repealed or improved on the mere suggestions, however convincing, of argument and philosophy. Legislators should be, therefore, very careful how they ever suspend, even for a moment, the great principles of policy and justice. Their successors are always more likely to acquiesce in their faults than to repair them. This has been shown but too clearly by all the subsequent events of our history.

When William the Third came to the throne, it was impossible for him to overlook the religious prejudices of his new subjects, and this most remarkable specimen of their unfortunate influence. His first attempt appears to have been to emancipate the Dissenters from the Test Act. He took the earliest opportunity, in one of his speeches, to observe (184\*), that "he was, with all the expedition he could, filling up the vacancies that were in offices and places of trust"; that, "as he doubted not but they would sufficiently provide against Papists, so he hoped they would leave room for the admission of all Protestants that were willing and able to serve."

But when a bill was shortly after brought into the Lords, for taking away the necessity of receiving the sacrament prior to any admission to an office, it was rejected by a great majority, and the following protest against this decision of the House appears in its Journals, signed by eight lords: —

"First, because" (page 196 of Cobbett's Parliamentary History, William and Mary) "a hearty union amongst Protestants is a greater security to the Church and State than any test that can be invented.

\* Cobbett's Parliamentary History, Vol. v. It is proper to remark that the quotations which follow in this and the subsequent paragraphs have been corrected by the original authorities, the Journals of the House of Lords. Cobbett is inexact. — N.



"Secondly, Because this obligation to receive the sacrament is a test on Protestants rather than on the Papists.

"Thirdly, Because, so long as it is continued, there cannot be that hearty and thorough union amongst Protestants as has always been wished, and is at this time indispensably necessary.

"Fourthly, Because a greater caution ought not to be required from such as are admitted into offices than from the members of the two houses of Parliament, who are not obliged to receive the sacrament to enable them to sit in either house.

(Signed)

"DELAMER.

"GREY.

"STAMFORD.

"P. WHARTON.

"NORTH AND GREY.

"J. LOVELACE.

"CHESTERFIELD.

"VAUGHAN."

Another effort was made two days after; for it was proposed that it should be sufficient for any man to have taken the sacrament in any Protestant congregation, so that by this proposal the Protestant Dissenters were verbally and distinctly set apart from the Papists. But in vain; the bill was still lost, and all the advantage which the cause of religious toleration obtained was the protest of six of the lords, who on this occasion placed on the Journals reasons that will for ever remain unanswerable, and may in time, it is to be hoped, produce their proper effect on the good sense and moderation of the community.

These reasons are to be found page 197 of Cobbett's Parliamentary History. The first, fourth, fifth, and sixth are of a general nature, and will be easily conceived by those who have considered the question.

"First, Because it gives great part of the Protestant freemen of England reason to complain of inequality and hard usage, when they are excluded from public employments by a law; and also because it deprives the king and kingdom of divers men fit and capable to serve the public in several stations, and that for a mere scruple of conscience, which can by no means render them suspected, much less disaffected to the government.

"Fourthly, Because it turns the edge of a law (we know not by what fate) upon Protestants and friends to the government, which *was intended against Papists*, to exclude them from places of trust, as men avowedly dangerous to our religion and government. And thus the taking the sacrament, which was enjoined only as a means to discover Papists, is now made a distinguishing duty amongst Protestants, to weaken the whole by casting off a part of them.

"Fifthly, Because mysteries of religion and Divine worship are of Divine original, and of a nature so wholly distant from the secular affairs of politic society, that they cannot be applied to those ends; and therefore the Church, by the law of the Gospel as well as common prudence, ought to take care not to offend either tender consciences within itself, or give offence to those without, by mixing their sacred mysteries with secular interests.

"Sixthly, Because we cannot see how it can consist with the law of God, common equity, or the right of any free-born subject, that any one be punished without a crime. If it be a crime not to take the sacrament according to the usage of the Church of England, every one ought to be punished for it; which nobody affirms. If it be no crime, those who are capable and judged fit for employment by the king ought not to be punished with a law of exclusion for not doing that which it is no crime to forbear.

(Signed)

"OXFORD.

"R. MONTAGU.

"MORDAUNT.

"P. WHARTON.

"J. LOVELACE.

"PAGETT."

The next attempt of the king was a bill of comprehension. As he could not relieve the Nonconformists while they remained such, he labored to induce the Church to enlarge her pale, and by omissions and concessions to render it possible for the Dissenters conscientiously to join her communion.

But the difficulty soon started in the House of Lords was, who were the proper persons to decide on these concessions, — a committee of the clergy, or a committee of the clergy and laity conjointly.

Burnet tells us that he himself made a mistake (and a very egregious mistake it was), and that he argued for the *former*: the House decided with him; that is, in favor of a committee of the clergy only.

A protest was, however, again left on the Journals, though signed only by three

Among other general and constitutional reasons for the interference of the laity in such subjects, the following one is given more particularly applicable to the case:—

"Fifthly, Because, the commission being intended for the satisfaction of Dissenters, it would be convenient that laymen of different ranks, nay, perhaps of different opinions, too, should be mixed in it, the better to find expedients for that end, rather than clergymen alone of our Church, who are generally observed to have very much the same way of reasoning and thinking.

(Signed)

"WINCHESTER.

"MORDAUNT.

"J. LOVELAKE."

But the Commons were still more intolerant than the Lords, and an address soon appeared from them,\* requesting the king to continue his care for the preservation of the Church of England, whose constitution they told him was best suited to the support of this monarchy, praying him to call a convocation of the clergy, assuring him, at the same time, that it was their intention to proceed to the consideration of giving ease to Protestant Dissenters.

When the Convocation came to decide on the humane intentions of the king, the reasonableness of the protest of the lords was soon apparent. Burnet, in pages 11 and 30, vol. ii., gives us some account of what passed both before and during these meetings. The more rigid "thought too much was already done for the Dissenters; . . . . that the altering the customs and constitution of our Church, to gratify a peevish and obstinate party, was like to have no other effect on them but to make them more insolent; as if the Church, by offering these alterations, seemed to confess that she had been hitherto in the wrong. They thought this attempt would divide us among ourselves, and make our people lose their esteem for the liturgy, if it appeared that it wanted correction."

To these arguments, which may be considered as the permanent arguments on the subject, the bishop offers his reply, and then goes on thus:—"But while men were arguing this matter on both sides, the party that was now at work for King James took hold of this occasion to inflame men's minds. It was said, the Church was to be pulled down, and Presbytery was to be set up. . . . . The Universities took fire upon this. . . . . Severe reflections were cast on the king, as being in an interest contrary to the Church. . . . . So that it was soon very visible," says at last the bishop, "that we were not in a temper cool or calm enough to encourage the further prosecuting such a design."

This want of religious moderation, of which the bishop speaks, must be considered as a striking proof of the deep impression that had been made on the community by the civil wars and long habits of religious dispute; for at the time that the Declaration of Rights was becoming the acknowledged constitution of the country, at the time that England had advanced so far before the great rival country of France in all the doctrines of *civil* liberty, in *religious* liberty she was actually a century behind her; the twenty-sixth article† of the edict of Nantes, enacted by Henry the Fourth (the contemporary of Elizabeth), admitted the Protestants to all civil offices indiscriminately with their fellow-Christians, the Roman Catholics.

The real ground on which these religious exclusions were and always have been defended is that of terror, — terror, lest the inferior sect, by obtaining political power, should, after a struggle for equality, contend at last for superiority.

It is not very creditable to human nature to observe, that, when this terror is *really* felt, it operates in a contrary way. In the settlement of religious claims and differences, the inferior sect often gains something from the fears, but never from the generosity, of the superior. The Protestants, for instance, had waged a long and desperate civil war with the Roman Catholics in France, and the terror which they *really* inspired enabled Henry the Fourth to procure for them such of the terms of the edict of Nantes as are of an equitable nature. Similar effects have been more or less produced in other countries, on similar occasions of reconciliation and pacification, through all the periods of these dreadful contentions. Afterwards, when the Protestants ceased to be such objects of terror, Louis the Fourteenth could indulge his intolerance, and banish them from their country in a manner the most impolitic and cruel.

In England, in like manner, had the Papists been at all competent to enter into a

\* This was a joint address of both houses. See Cobbett's *Parl. Hist.*, Vol. v. 216–218; *Journals of the House of Commons*, April 13, 1689; *Journals of the House of Lords*, April 16, 1689. — N.

† Article XXVII. — N.



contest of *force* with the Protestants, there would never have appeared such a dreadful array of penal laws on our statute-books. The Scotch obtained from us, by arms, their kirk. So, too, the Nonconformists in William's time would never have been excluded from offices, or even from the pale of the Church of England, if they had *really* inspired those apprehensions which their opponents affected to feel, or at least persuaded themselves that they, on the whole, might as well act upon.

In seasons of real terror, religious factions either conciliate or positively murder and destroy each other, as in the pacifications with the Huguenots, and the massacres of France and Ireland. It is in intervals of comparative repose and of considerable security that the superior sect suffers its malignity calmly to expand into penal statutes, sweeping accusations, and ungenerous suspicions, — into arguments that admit not of answer (because they turn upon their own feelings and apprehensions), and into amusing exhortations to the inferior sect "to wait for better times," &c., &c.

## LECTURE XXII.

## I.

*Reporting of Debates.*

IN 1694, one Dyer, a news-letter writer, having presumed in his news-letter to take notice of the proceedings of the House, he was summoned to the House, reprimanded, &c., and on the Journals appears the following order: — "That no news-letter writers do, in their letters, or other papers, that they disperse, presume to intermeddle with the debates or any other proceedings of this House."

This most important subject sometimes occurs in the proceedings of the House, and should always be well observed. To this moment, it has never been regularly adjusted. But on one of the greatest occasions of the late Mr. Pitt's eloquence the reporters were fortunately excluded; they very properly attempted not to give any idea of his speech. Mr. Sheridan, with his usual patriotic alertness on such occasions, was ready to take advantage of the public disappointment, and make some motion on the subject. But having been given to understand, and it appearing to be the general sense of the House, and of the ministers themselves, that no disturbance should be in future offered to the reporters, the motion was dropped. Not only had society improved, but the distresses and dangers of the country had shown the ministers of later times the necessity of keeping the public properly informed even on their own measures, and therefore of reporting the debates.

## II.

THE proper adjustment of this delicate point — of the revenue of the crown — is one of the great features of what may be called the second part of our history. During the first part, prior to the Revolution, when the king, as the great executive magistrate of the realm, had to bear the expenses of the state by means of his own funds and the supplies he could extract from his Parliaments, not only was the welfare of the realm too immediately affected by the nature of his personal qualities, but it was impossible that the question should not give occasion to constant bickerings and jealousy between the king and his Parliaments. In ruder ages, the king, without much inconvenience or injury, might be considered as taking upon himself the charge and management of the great concerns of the state, and as wielding all the physical strength of the community, for the defence, and even benefit, of the realm; but that such a disposition of things should survive the causes which gave it birth, and should descend to so late a period, is only one proof among many how little of contrivance or regular adjustment there is in the affairs of mankind, and how governments, after their first rude formation, are, at particular epochs, and in a most dangerous manner, tumbled and tossed into shapes of greater convenience by the unexpected and often violent operation of mere chance and change, rather than moulded into forms of symmetry and usefulness by reasonable alteration and timely improvement.

The subject of the revenue of the crown was finally settled early in the reign of George the Third, as may be seen in Blackstone. There are, however, some sources of revenue that still very properly exercise the vigilance of patriotic members in the House of Commons during the time of war.

### III.

THE proceedings in Sir John Fenwick's case took place in the reign of William the Third, and are highly disgraceful to the Whigs. It is scarcely possible that bills of attainder should be otherwise than perfectly disgraceful to those who have recourse to them. They are the convenient, but coarse and savage, expedients of power; for bills of attainder take away the life of an offender by positive enactment, and that, because according to the *existing* laws he cannot be pronounced guilty. The bowstring of a sultan, or the execution of a tyrant, can do no more. In each case there is a departure from those known forms and antecedent provisions of law which are the only real protection of innocence. Sir John Fenwick was, there can be no doubt, guilty of treason; but it is to be feared that many who voted away his life, when the laws could not take it, voted from the basest motives, to remove out of hearing a man who knew and could have proclaimed too much.

On this occasion, it is the arguments of the Tories only which we can read with pleasure. These men might have been taught, while they were using the generous maxims of government introduced to their understandings on this particular occasion, their cogency and their justice on every other occasion.

"This bill," said the great Tory leader, Sir Edward Seymour, "is against the law of God, against the law of the land: it does contribute to the subversion of our constitution, and to the subversion of all government; for if there be rules to be observed in all governments, and no government can be without them, if you subvert those rules, you destroy the government. — The law enjoins forms strictly, even to the least circumstance: men are not left to a discretionary power to act according to their consciences."

"As to Sir John Fenwick," said Howe, another Tory leader, "though he should not be a good Englishman, yet his cause may be the cause of a good Englishman. — Your enemies, you say, will have an advantage, and your government is at stake: we sit not here to patch the failings of the one by an unwarrantable prosecution against the others."

### IV.

LORD Clarendon's act of 1662, for the licensing of the press, &c., &c., was to be in force for two years; it remained so; it was then continued. It was again continued by James the Second in 1685, and enacted for seven years. It therefore existed at the Revolution, and was left to continue until 1692, four years after the Revolution, and through all the sessions of the Convention Parliament. In 1692, when the *Tories* were in power, it was renewed for two years longer; but it then expired, in 1694. What, therefore, was then done by the Parliament?

It appears by the Journals of the Commons, that directions were given by the House to two of its members, at four different times from the years 1694 to 1698, to prepare a bill for the licensing of printing-presses, &c., &c. On one occasion, the Whigs seemed almost ready, from the irritation of the moment, to disgrace themselves by some bill of the kind. They, however, did not disgrace themselves. On another occasion, a bill of this sort passed the Lords, and was even once read in the Commons. It was, however, lost on the second reading; and the act of Charles the Second having expired in 1694, and having existed till the influence of the Revolution and the general progress of society had enabled men to discover its very objectionable nature, no efforts seem afterwards to have been able to revive it, and it now remains on our statute-book only as a monument of that well-intentioned, but unenlightened, legislation which constitutes so important a part of the instruction to be derived from the perusal of history.

I must observe, that I cannot find any detail of any debates connected with these proceedings. The Journals of the houses give nothing but the mere facts and results and such debates as have been published entirely fail us on this very interesting occasion.



## V.

THE Act of Settlement was the last labor which William the Third contributed to the great cause of the Revolution. The heads of this act were prepared in a committee, and we cannot now discover the different views of the subject that were taken by the statesmen of the time. This is to be lamented. The act seems to have given occasion to no debate in the houses. On the whole, it does honor to the Tories, who were then in power. Provisions were made against the consequences of a foreigner coming to the throne, though they were not afterwards found to be complete. The laws of England are pronounced to be the birthright of the people thereof. The kings and queens, it is declared, ought to administer the government according to these laws. But in a manner somewhat strange, and not very systematic, there are three constitutional points provided for, and not more: that those who have places and pensions should not be members of the Commons; that the commissions of judges shall be made "*quamdiu se bene gesserint*"; and that no pardon under the great seal shall be impleadable to an impeachment. Descending into these particulars, it is singular that they proceeded no farther; still more so, that they should incorporate the Place Bill (a bill so contested) upon this, the most solemn and important enactment, the disposal of the succession of the crown, which they could ever have to make

## LECTURES XXIII., XXIV.

## I.

*Duke of Marlborough.*

I CANNOT avoid remarking that this illustrious man never had the advantage of a liberal education; his son, indeed, the hope of his house, was admitted at this University, was cut off in early life, and is buried in King's Chapel; but he was himself removed at the age of twelve from the care of a clergyman, introduced to the patronage of the Duke of York, and from the first initiated in all the pleasures and political intrigues of what was then a very unsettled and licentious court; and though this education might certainly furnish the fine understanding of Marlborough with that quick insight into human character, and that thorough knowledge of the world, as it is called, for which he was so distinguished, it may surely be affirmed that the school in which he was thus bred up, even from his boyish days, was not likely to elevate his mind to a comprehensive view of the real interests of mankind, or to exalt his feelings above that love of personal consequence which is so strong a principle of action in men of rank and fortune, and which it is only for letters and philosophy properly to soften and subdue.

It may be natural for those, who, like ourselves, are participating in the advantages of a regular education, somewhat to overstate its influence in fitting men to be statesmen and the benefactors of their species. Such happy effects are not always visible in our young men of rank and consequence; but many seeds must be sown to raise one flower so precious, and it may at least be said that men who have not liberalized their sentiments and enriched their minds at the proper season of advancing manhood by meditation and intellectual pursuits, and who, on the contrary, have put on early the harness of the world or of official situation, — such men, it may surely be said, are found invariably to fail on all great occasions, — on all occasions where objects of national policy are intermixed with the great interests of human nature, — where wisdom is required, and not cunning, — and where the most generous magnanimity is, as on such occasions it always is, the soundest prudence.

## II.

*Commercial Treaty with France.*

ANOTHER subject that excited a considerable ferment in the nation was the commercial treaty that had been attempted with France at the conclusion of the treaty of Utrecht. The principle of the treaty was, to open the trade between the two countries by removing as much as possible the reciprocal duties. But the merchants and trading companies took the alarm. The public opinion, by the assistance of the Whigs, overpowered the influence of the ministers, and the bill by which the eighth and ninth articles of the commercial treaty were to be sanctioned was lost.

The arguments which prevailed on this occasion were, that in 1674 a committee of the most able merchants had considered the nature of our trade with France, and that it appeared we lost every year a million of money by it. Again, that we should lose our trade with Portugal by the preference given to the French wines; and that the trade to Portugal was invaluable.

These reasonings proceeded upon the supposition, that no trade with any country was beneficial, unless we exported to that country more value in goods than we imported, and consequently received the difference in money; which was considered as the measure of the profit, and was called "having the balance of the trade in our favor." But the whole of this principle of the balance of trade has been shown by Adam Smith to be a mistake.

It was also argued, that, since our Revolution, the French had set up the woollen trade, and no longer took our woollens, and we had set up the silk trade, and no longer took their silks; and the inference was, not that both nations had done very unwisely, had each very improperly endeavoured to contend with the natural advantages of the other, and that the sooner a mistaken rivalry of this kind was at an end, the better; but the inference was this, — that England had thus saved and gained vast sums of money, and had employed an infinite number of artificers, who would be reduced to beggary, if the importation of French goods were allowed, because the French had their work done for less money, and consequently would sell their commodities cheaper. — Cobbett, 1212.

I mention these particulars for the sake of recommending to your attention, as I have before done, the study of political economy, the writings of Adam Smith.

Statesmen and nations may be distinguished for their knowledge of the great leading principles of civil and religious liberty; but they *might* also be distinguished for their knowledge of the great leading principles on which their agriculture and manufactures, their commerce, foreign and domestic, depend. Their progress, however, in the last subjects of reflection has been less than in the former; for it so happens, that the first impressions and most natural conclusions of the mind on all such questions are erroneous. The public, therefore, always have been, and must always be expected to remain, liable to the most serious misapprehensions of their ultimate interests in affairs of this nature. In our own country, however, since the publication of "The Wealth of Nations," our statesmen, and all persons of regular education, have been rendered totally inexcusable, if they no longer understand the real principles of that production and that commerce, internal and external, which occupy so much of their thoughts and contribute so much to their enjoyments.

It is quite necessary to observe, that those who are more particularly engaged in the business of our prosperity, our merchants and manufacturers, are little fitted by the habits of their lives for the comprehension of those abstract principles, distant views, and ultimate conclusions in which the science of political economy so peculiarly abounds; and it belongs more particularly to those who are men of influence and education to endeavour to comprehend, explain, and circulate the reasonings of philosophers on these important subjects. They who engage, either in private or public, in such meritorious labors will find reason enough for the exercise of their patience, and will often receive the greatest obstruction from those very persons who might have been expected, from the occupations of their lives, to be both able and willing to furnish them with every possible assistance. But as the progress of knowledge on these subjects has now been for some time distinctly visible, all such more intelligent men have full as much reason to be encouraged as any of their fellow-laborers in the service of mankind.



## III.

*Hanover Papers, and Bolingbroke's Letter to Wyndham.*

THE Hanover Papers for 1711 are interesting, as are the Stuart Papers for 1712, containing, among other particulars, the calumnies that were then propagated against Lord Somers, Prince Eugene, the Duke of Marlborough, &c., &c.

The greatest difficulty with which the Pretender had to struggle seems to have been his religion. The scheme in contemplation was, if possible, to call him over in the lifetime of his sister, Queen Anne, and in this manner to introduce him gradually to the throne. The Hanover Papers of 1713 are somewhat curious; so are the Stuart Papers of 1714.

To each of these sets of Papers there is a sort of dissertation prefixed, which may always be read.

In the course of these Papers, the merit of Harley appears (340, 379); he seems to have been considered by the agents for the Stuarts as never entitled to their confidence; and it is on this darkness and hesitation, and the probability that it arose from a secret wish to serve the house of Hanover, that the chief part of this merit must be left to depend.

After these Papers have been consulted, Bolingbroke's Letter to Sir William Wyndham should be read, not merely as a curious document from a most celebrated man, relative to the most important concerns of this period, but as one of the classic productions of our literature, and as the best specimen of an exculpatory narrative that can be found in our language. No better model can be offered than this, to those who would wish to form a style of all others the best fitted for statesmen, whether speaking in the senate or writing in the closet; the best fitted, because it is of all others the most adapted to convey information to the man of business, and delight to the man of real and matured taste: nothing superfluous in the ornaments, nothing unmeaning in the expressions; the whole clear, natural, and easy, moving on with a rapidity which never slackens and a spirit which never languishes, and scarcely suffering the reader for a moment to reflect on the exact truth or propriety of the matter that is delivered.

## IV.

*Life and Conduct of the Duchess of Marlborough.*

THIS publication contains a detail, chiefly, of the duchess's merits with the queen; but it is still not without reference, and sometimes important reference, to the opinions of the times, and the changes that took place; and it is valuable as giving incidentally a general notion of the intrigues of the court of Anne, during a very singular era of the English history. The style and thoughts indicate a clear, rapid, able mind, and are those of one bred in courts, and used to the world and its business. It is not favorable to King William, still less to Queen Mary, and shows very strongly the bias of Queen Anne's mind to the opinions and principles of the Tories. On the whole, it is not long, is sometimes important, and always entertaining.

## V.

*The Protestant Succession.*

"WHAT party," says Hume, "an impartial patriot in the reign of King William or Queen Anne would have chosen, amidst these opposite views," — views which he states, — "may perhaps to some appear hard to determine."

In the old edition of these Essays (the edition of 1754) may be found the following sentence, which involves a consideration which would have enabled any such impartial patriot to determine, without all the difficulty which Mr. Hume supposes: — "For my part," says Mr. Hume, "I esteem liberty so invaluable a blessing in society, that whatever favors its progress and security can scarce be too fondly cherished by every one who is a lover of human kind."

This paragraph Mr. Hume afterwards thought proper to expunge; thinking, perhaps, that it would appear but a literary flourish, coming from a writer who was considered as the apologist of the Stuarts; or losing, perhaps, as he grew older, that quickness of sympathy by which sentiments in favor of liberty are so happily rendered dear to us in all the earlier stages of our existence.

## LECTURE XXVI.

## I.

"SIR ROBERT WALPOLE, prime minister of Great Britain, is a man of ability, not a genius; good-natured, not virtuous; constant, not magnanimous; moderate in the exercise of power, not equitable in engrossing it. His virtues, in some instances, are free from the alloy of those vices which usually accompany such virtues: he is a generous friend, without being a bitter enemy. His vices, in other instances, are not compensated by those virtues which are nearly allied to them: his want of enterprise is not attended with frugality. The private character of the man is better than the public, his virtues more than his vices; his fortune greater than his fame. With many good qualities, he has incurred the public hatred; with good capacity, he has not escaped ridicule. He would have been esteemed more worthy of his high station, had he never possessed it; and is better qualified for the second than for the first place in any government. His ministry has been more advantageous to his family than to the public; better for this age than for posterity; and more pernicious by bad precedents than by real grievances. During his time, trade has flourished, liberty declined, and learning gone to ruin. As I am a man, I love him; as I am a scholar, I hate him; as I am a Briton, I calmly wish his fall; and were I a member of either house, I would give my vote for removing him from St. James's; but should be glad to see him retire to Houghton Hall, to pass the remainder of his days in ease and pleasure."

The above character of Sir Robert appears in one of the early and now scarce editions of Hume's Essays.

A character much more masterly and just is given by Mr. Burke, in his Appeal from the New to the Old Whigs.

The beautiful lines of the poet are well known:—

"Seen him I have, but in his happier hour  
Of social pleasure, ill exchanged for power;  
Seen him, uncumbered with the venal tribe,  
Smile without art, and win without a bribe."

## II.

I HAVE mentioned the speeches from the throne, and will give a specimen of them. In the speeches of George the First are found the following expressions:—

"As none can recommend themselves more effectually to my favor and countenance than by a sincere zeal for the just rights of the crown and the liberties of the people, so I am determined to encourage all those who act agreeably to the constitution of these my kingdoms, and consequently to the principles on which my government is founded."

"To gain the hearts and affections of my people shall always be my first and principal care. On their duty and loyalty I will entirely depend. They may as surely depend on my protection in the full enjoyment of their religion, liberty, and property."

"You will make it your business to promote that perfect harmony and confidence between me and my people, which I most earnestly desire, and on which our mutual happiness entirely depends."

The dignified language in which George the First addressed his people in 1722, when in expectation of a rebellion, has been properly remarked by one of our historians.

"Had I, since my accession to the throne, ever attempted any innovation in our established religion; had I, in any one instance, invaded the liberty or property of my subjects; I should less wonder at any endeavours to alienate the affections of my people, and draw them into measures that can end in nothing but their own destruction."

"But to hope to persuade a free people, in full enjoyment of all that is dear and valuable to them, to exchange freedom for slavery, the Protestant religion for Popery, and to sacrifice at once the price of so much blood and treasure as have been spent in defence of our present establishment, seems an infatuation not to be accounted for."

One of the most singular circumstances that occurred during the reign of George the First was the introduction of the Peerage Bill by the ministers of the crown. This project originated in motives not the most creditable either to the favorite, Sunderland, or the monarch,—inordinate ambition in the one, and mean jealousy of his son and successor in the other; but it produced some noble passages in two of the



king's speeches, which would have been indeed precious, if they had obtained a place there on any better occasion.

"I have always looked upon the glory of the sovereign and the liberty of the subject as inseparable, and think it is the peculiar happiness of a British king to reign over a free people. As the civil rights, therefore, and privileges of all my subjects, and especially of my two houses of Parliament, do justly claim my most tender concern, if any provision designed to perpetuate these blessings to your posterity remains imperfect, I promise myself you will take the first opportunity," &c., &c.

And again:—

"If the necessities of my government have sometimes engaged your duty and affections to trust me with powers of which you have always with good reason been jealous, the whole world must acknowledge they have been so used as to justify the confidence you have reposed in me. And as I can truly affirm that no prince was ever more zealous to increase his own authority than I am to perpetuate the liberty of my people, I hope you will think of all proper methods to establish and transmit to your posterity the freedom of our happy constitution, and particularly to secure that part which is most liable to abuse."

This last extract is given by Coxe.

In the speeches of George the Second expressions are always found, on every proper occasion, that intimate the desirableness of confidence and harmony between the people and the executive power, and that the interests of the two are inseparable. They should be looked at even on this account, if on no other.

"I heartily wish," said the king, in his first speech, "that this first solemn declaration of my mind in Parliament could sufficiently express the sentiments of my heart, and give you a perfect and just sense of my fixed resolution by all possible means to merit the love and affection of my people, which I shall always look upon as the best support and security of my crown."

"And as the religion, liberty, property, and a due execution of the laws, are the most valuable blessings of a free people, and the peculiar privileges of this nation, it shall be my constant care to preserve the constitution of this kingdom, as it is now happily established in Church and State, inviolable in all its parts, and to secure to all my subjects the full enjoyment of their religious and civil rights."

The speech of the year 1734, preparatory to the dissolution of the Parliament, has been noticed by Mr. Coxe. If it was intended to do away any impressions that might have been made on the public by the speeches and writings of the adversaries of the minister, representing him as having planned a regular system of oppression, it was certainly well fitted for its purpose; for no speech could be more worthy of an intelligent monarch and an upright minister, addressed to a free people.

"The prosperity and glory of my reign," says his Majesty, "depend upon the affection and happiness of my people; and the happiness of my people, upon my preserving to them all their legal rights and privileges, as established under the present settlement of the crown in the Protestant line. A due execution and strict observance of the laws are the best and only security both to sovereign and subject; their interest is mutual and inseparable; and therefore their endeavours for the support of each other ought to be equal and reciprocal: any infringement or encroachment upon the rights of either is a diminution of the strength of both, which, kept within their due bounds and limits, make that just balance which is necessary for the honor and dignity of the crown, and for the protection and prosperity of the people. What depends upon me shall, on my part, be religiously kept and observed; and I make no doubt of receiving the just returns of duty and gratitude from them."

"I must in a particular manner recommend it to you, and from your known affection do expect, that you will use your best endeavours to heal the unhappy divisions of the nation, and to reconcile the minds of all who truly and sincerely wish the safety and welfare of the kingdom. It would be the greatest satisfaction to me to see a perfect harmony restored amongst them that have one and the same principle at heart, that there might be no distinction, but of such as mean the support of our present happy constitution in Church and State, and such as wish to subvert both. This is the only distinction that ought to prevail in this country, where the interest of king and people is one and the same, and where they cannot subsist but by being so. If religion, liberty, and property were never at any time more fully enjoyed, without not only any attempt, but even the shadow of a design, to alter or invade them, let not these sacred names be made use of as artful and plausible pretences to undermine the present establishment, under which alone they can be safe."

"I have nothing to wish, but that my people may not be misguided. I appeal to their own consciences for my conduct, and hope the Providence of God will direct them in the choice of such representatives as are most fit to be trusted with the care and preservation of the Protestant religion, the present establishment, and all the religious and civil rights of Great Britain."

Even in the king's speech of 1737, after the murder of Captain Porteous, at Edinburgh, and other circumstances of very great and just offence to the minister and the executive power, the expressions made use of were only the following, — perfectly reasonable and dignified, and worthy of the minister, and of the sovereign of a free people: —

"My Lords and Gentlemen, — You cannot be insensible what just scandal and of fence the licentiousness of the present times, under the color and disguise of liberty, gives to all honest and sober men, and how absolutely necessary it is to restrain this excessive abuse by a due and vigorous execution of the laws. Defiance of all authority, contempt of magistracy, and even resistance of the law, are become too general, although equally prejudicial to the prerogative of the crown and the liberties of the people; the support of the one being inseparable from the protection of the other. I have made the laws of the land the constant rule of my actions; and I do with reason expect, in return, all that submission to my authority and government which the same laws have made the duty, and shall always be the interest, of my subjects."

## LECTURE XXVII.

THE great French work of Forbonnais is the most regular treatise on the system of Law. Here will be found all the history of the system, and all the violent and unjust measures that were adopted to support it; but the detail is difficult to understand, and after passing many hours over it, more than I can expect others to do, I can only advise you, in the first place, to study well the chapters of Steuart.

The treatise which Law addressed to the Parliament of Scotland is short, and may be met with; it explains his objections to the use of the precious metals, and the manner in which he would have converted the whole fee-simple of the land into circulating medium. Scotland, and every other country, was, he conceived, suffering from the want of circulating medium, which was all that he thought was necessary to its prosperity. Commissioners were, therefore, to be appointed to issue paper money on land security, &c.

There is a certain portion of truth in Law's notions, sufficient to deceive him, as it had deceived many others. For while money flows into a country by the fabrication of paper money, the effect is beneficial; it is beneficial while the money *continues* to flow, — no longer; for every man, during this interval, receives a full return for any effort in industry that he can make; the quantity of circulating medium has been increasing while he was making this effort, and he therefore receives more than he would otherwise have done. But the moment the tide stops, this high remunerating price stops also, and every opposite consequence arises; and stop it must, if artificially produced.

The whole subject is very well explained by Hume, in his Essay on Money.

## LECTURE XXVIII.

### I.

#### *Highlanders.*

THE work of Mrs. Grant might, with great advantage, be compressed into half its present size. What is told is not told in a manner sufficiently simple, nor is there enough told. Mrs. Grant pours out the sentiments and images of a warm heart and



ardent mind, till they overpower the reader and lose their effect. Too favorable an idea of the work, though a work of merit, would be formed from the Edinburgh Review.

The points to be observed in the character of the Highlanders seem to be, according to this account by Mrs. Grant, their national spirit, language, habits, poetry, traditions, genealogies, their attachment to their chief, and their superstitions; that they are warlike, musical, poetical, tender, melancholy, enthusiastic, superstitious, religious; that they are patriotic; secluded, themselves, and excluding others; connecting and associating themselves familiarly with death, and with the immaterial world; seeing those they loved in the clouds, in dreams, and in visions; skilled in the art of conversation, from the necessity of living with each other; unfit for manufactures; highly moral; careful not to make imprudent marriages; courteous, and, in a word, exhibiting all the virtues that result from living in the presence of each other.

## II.

October, 1839.

I MAY recommend to others, what I have just had so much pleasure in reading myself, the History lately published by Lord Mahon. All that need now be known of the era to which we have been adverting, from the peace of Utrecht to that of Aix-la-Chapelle, will be there found. It is on every account to be hoped that his Lordship will continue his historical labors.

## LECTURE XXIX.

*Mirabeau's Work on Prussia.*

WHAT I advise the student to do is, to look through the pages of Mirabeau, and from the midst of the details pick out the general remarks with which they are accompanied. These remarks are of general application, and may therefore be valuable to the student, whatever may be the statements in the midst of which they appear. I will give a short specimen of what I mean.

Certain details, for instance, are gone into with respect to some successful efforts made by the king to restore the population and prosperity of Pomerania; and then the general remark is the following:—"But be that as it may,—clear away the waste land, make the air wholesome, augment the means of subsistence by a perfect freedom of all industry and commerce, and leave every thing else to Nature; call in no strangers,"—the favorite measure of Frederic,—“your own people will increase fast enough, if you allow them the proper means of subsistence. But if, on the contrary, you will scarcely let them have air to breathe in, grind them down by feudal services of day-labor and slavery, clog their industry, and choke and smother their commerce, your population must be kept down to the point which the weight of your chains determines; and vain is your gold, and your invitations to strangers to come and colonize.”

Now this is a remark perfectly just, and applicable to every possible case and situation of society.

Again, in another place (p. 389), the general remark is this:—"It is not the plenty of the circulating medium, or money, that enriches a people: it is the absence of all those systems, and all those oppressions, that can indispose men to labor; the humanity, the policy, which prevents a state from tearing away from the people their money as soon as they have earned it. If you take from people their gains to pay your taxes and impositions, direct and indirect, how can they have a surplus with which to make improvements or better their condition? what must become of your agriculture, and the population that belongs to it?"

Observations of a like general nature will be found with respect to the serfs; to the proper circulation of property,—its transfer, for instance, from nobles, who ruin themselves by extravagance, to those who accumulate fortunes by their industry and economy. So, again, with respect to the Jesuits, and the difficult problem of managing the

province of Silesia, almost equally divided between the Catholics and Protestants — the Catholics being at least not more than four to three.

In one part, Mirabeau seems to have his mind too much monopolized by the merits of agriculture, by the system of his father. A town and its manufactures may enrich the neighbouring country by awakening and rewarding its industry; and such has been the progress of things in the history of the world. It does not at all follow, that, for the establishment of manufactures, you must inevitably withdraw from a country the capitals that would be necessary for its agriculture. If it be, indeed, contended by Mirabeau, that the natural progress of affluence is in the contrary direction, and that agriculture is the first and great point to be secured, — that manufactures and splendid towns are properly the *effect*, rather than the *cause*, of prosperity, (as will hereafter be seen in America, though this has not been the course in Europe,) no objection need be made to his positions. But on this subject the partisans of the opposite systems seem each so occupied by the particular advantages they have in view, that they are scarcely willing to hear each other, or allow the mutual benefits which the commerce of the towns and of the country, that is, which manufacture and agriculture, are so fitted mutually to interchange, multiply, and consolidate.

The management of the poor comes likewise in review; and Frederic's notions, as well as Mirabeau's, may be considered in these volumes. That Frederic is wrong, there can be no doubt; but when Mirabeau arrives at his concluding remark, it appears to be, that work ought to be offered for all who demand it. But I fear that this is the great difficulty of the case. The difficulty might be encountered, might be even submitted to; that is, the community might think it good policy to employ people at a loss, rather than not have them employed at all. But the difficulty is itself, I conceive, insuperable. The notions of our own legislators, in the famous statute respecting the poor, in the time of Elizabeth, were the same as those of Mirabeau. The overseers were expected to *find* work, — that is, I fear, whether it could or could not be found.

The second book (that which is contained in the second volume) contains, towards the close, observations by Mirabeau of the same reasonable nature as before. The general conclusion is, that Frederic, after all, did *not* increase the population of his dominions. On the whole, the second book is very well worth reading.

The third book relates to the agriculture and natural productions. Here, as before, it is the general observations for which I should wish the student to look out. Such may occasionally be found. The book, however, is principally occupied in details, and the student will not have the patience to read it. The same may be said, in general, of the fourth book, on manufactures. The details cannot now be appreciated, but the general observations may; particularly the introduction, in which are laid down, very properly, on the principles of Adam Smith, those causes which impede, and those which promote, the progress of manufactures: liberty of every sort, moral, religious, physical; the general encouragement of science and knowledge. On the contrary, he protests against all exclusive privileges, all prohibitions on the export of the raw material, and on the export of the manufacture. He protests against all imposts on foreign manufactures, all advances to manufacturers in the way of capitals, &c., &c. Observations such as these are of a general nature; they are not so thinly scattered over the fourth book as over the third. Linens, silk, and many articles give occasion to them.

The fifth book is dedicated to commerce, and is opened by very striking remarks. A proper testimony is paid to our own great writer, Adam Smith, and to Monsieur Mauvillon, the philosopher to whom, as I have already mentioned, Mirabeau has in this work been so much indebted.

The system on which Mirabeau proceeds is the modern system, of perfect freedom; and the mistake of supposing that the prosperity of a country depends on the favorable balance, as it is called, of trade, &c.

There is, however, some inaccuracy, I conceive, or at least looseness of statement, in the general position which he lays down, — that commerce does not enrich a nation as it does the individuals who carry it on. Merchants who carry it on are of two sorts, — those who buy and sell on commission for other people, and those who are themselves entirely interested in their sales and purchases. It is only the last description to which the term of *merchant* philosophically applies. And with respect to these last the observations of Mirabeau do not exactly hold; the interest of these last and of the country is the same. Does the merchant, for instance, bring from another country an article which he sells at home at a great price? The event shows how much his



own country wanted the article; that is, that he could not have been better employed, either for his own interest or the interest of the community. Does he, on the contrary, lose by his venture? This shows that his own country did not want the article, and he could not have been worse employed.

In other points Mirabeau's observations seem just, that every thing in a state is in reality commerce. The laborer traffics and sells his physical strength or intellectual powers, the farmer his produce, the manufacturer his goods to the merchant, the merchant to the consumer, &c. He holds, however, and very properly, that the internal commerce is the great mark of the happiness of a community, which may be carried by that internal commerce to the greatest extent, and its exports and imports be comparatively trifling; that is, its happiness, its internal health and strength, may, if fortunately situated; but not, it must at the same time be observed, its *external* force or influence. The case supposed is not likely to exist, but it is no doubt possible; that is, it is not contrary to the nature of things.

In this book will be found a very regular attack on the system of the balance of trade; and Mirabeau proceeds, as Smith would have done, to censure the various companies and monopolies which Frederic had the impolicy to allow, or to establish, — among others, the bank royal, to which Mirabeau makes forcible objections; and he finishes, as he began, with striking and just remarks on commerce, merchants, and agriculture, the relative and absolute values of which, in these concluding pages, he seems to state with proper discrimination. The result is, according to Mirabeau, that the merchant in Prussia, as well as the manufacturer, is possessed but of a tottering existence; that he is a sort of being springing up from the expectation of some assistance to be received from the monarch, or violently produced by the mere necessity which a man feels to make some attempt or other to gain a livelihood.

The sixth book is dedicated to the consideration of the revenues and expenses of Prussia. It opens with stating and explaining the rights and claims which belonged to the king, derived to him from feudal principles. Some good observations follow on the subject of the coin of a country, and on taxes in general. On the subject of taxes, the particular notions of the system of the economists appear. Mirabeau is decidedly against all indirect taxes, — that is, taxes drawn in the way of custom-house and excises, where the consumer pays the whole in the ultimate price, without being aware of it. His arguments appear to me not very satisfactory. The case of England occurs to him; his expressions are remarkable. "Cite not to me," he says, "the case of England, as you are continually doing; for, not to mention the terrible consequences with which these indirect taxes threaten her prosperity and her liberties, are you not aware that the civil freedom which every man enjoys in that country remedies, atones for, and bears up against every evil and disadvantage? that England, thanks to her situation and constitution, is no example on this occasion? Can you, will you, give your own subjects the immense advantages which England enjoys?" Such are the words of Mirabeau. Our civil freedom, he evidently supposes, is the vital principle which enables the state to bear up against all its infirmities and diseases.

Frederic's own ideas on taxes are justly considered by Mirabeau as not very distinct or profound. He created monopolies, — the worst of all taxes, — and then used to say, towards the close of his life, "Why should any one complain? I have never, through the whole of my reign, imposed a new tax."

Again, a terrible sort of board, consisting of French financiers, was formed for managing the excises. Every evil followed. After considering these evils, "Such," says Mirabeau, "have been the fruits of the administration of the rights and claims of Frederic; and who can survey this melancholy picture," he continues, "without being overpowered by compassion for the people of Prussia? without being overcome with indignation at the writers who have dared to vaunt and hold up to admiration the system of Frederic? Let them not profane, with their unworthy incense, the tomb of a hero, — one who was great enough to admit of our allowing him to have been deceived, without any diminution of his glory; and who was too great not to make it necessary to unveil his faults, lest they should acquire an authority under the shadow of his great name."

Mirabeau's remarks on the military force and resources of Prussia were very striking, and might have taught us, as I have already mentioned, in later times, important lessons. There is a sort of prophecy of the movement of Bonaparte before the battle of Austerlitz.

## LIST OF BOOKS

### RECOMMENDED AND REFERRED TO IN THE LECTURES ON MODERN HISTORY.

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THE shortest course of historical reading that can be proposed seems to be the following:—

First three chapters of Gibbon, and the 9th, for the Romans and Barbarians, &c.; the chapters about Mahomet and his followers. Butler on the German Constitution the subjects there mentioned to be followed up in Gibbon. (1)

Hénault's or Millot's Abridgment of the History of France; or the History of France lately published by D'Anquetil (not the Universal History) in 14 small 8vo volumes; with the Observations sur l'Histoire de France by the Abbé de Mably, a book quite invaluable. Voltaire's Louis XIV., &c., &c., and Charles XII.; with the Memoirs of Duclos. (2)

Robertson's historical works, with most of Coxe's House of Austria, and Watson's Philip the Second. (3)

Hume and Millar. (4)

Parts of Laing's Scotland; Leland's Ireland.

Burke's European Settlements. Belsham and Adolphus, — neither without the other. Historical parts of Annual Register. (5)

Russell's Modern Europe may supply the rest; and the volumes of the Modern Universal History may be referred to, for accounts of every state and kingdom, — the best authors are mentioned in their margins.

Priestley's Lectures should be looked at for the nature of historical authorities, &c., &c.

For Chronology, there is a great French work, *L'Art de vérifier les Dates*. Dufresnoy may be met with easily.

This appears to be the shortest course of historical reading that can be proposed.

But Adam Smith should also be studied, and the work of Mr. Malthus, with the works in morals and metaphysics.

Of statesmen and legislators History and Political Economy are the professional studies, and are never to cease.

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(1) To these may be added, to make a Second Course, Koch on the Middle Ages, an excellent book, and Butler's *Horæ Juridicæ*, for different codes of law, &c.

(2) To these may be added, Wrexall's Memoirs of the House of Valois, and Wrexall's History of France.

(3) To these may be added, Harte's Gustavus Adolphus; parts of Roscoe's Lorenzo de' Medici, and more particularly parts of his Leo the Tenth; with Planta's Helvetic Confederacy.

(4) To these may be added, much of Rapin, particularly from the death of Richard the Third; parts of Clarendon, and Burnet's History of his own Times; Cobbett's Parliamentary History, to be read in a general manner with Hume; Macpherson's and Dalrymple's Original Papers; with Fox's History of James the Second, and the Appendix.

(5) To these may be added, Lacretelle's *Histoire de France pendant le XVIII. Siècle*; afterwards his *Précis Historique de la Révolution Française*.

To all these may again be added, to make a Third Course, parts of Pfeffel, a book of great authority, — and of Sale's Koran, Mosheim, Neal's History of the Puritans, Fox's Martyrs; and also Burnet's History of the Reformation, Ludlow, Life of Colonel Hutchinson, Whitelocke. Harris's Lives of the Stuarts, &c., &c., will be found full of information and Somerville's History of William and Anne should be read, with Coxe's Sir Robert Walpole.



THE books referred to in the Lectures, down to the end of the American War, were the following.

Cæsar, Tacitus (*De Moribus Germaniæ*), for Romans and Barbarians; with the first three chapters of Gibbon, and the 9th. Lindembrogius, for Barbarian Codes; Salique Code to be read. Baluze, for Capitularies. Butler on the German Constitution. Ditto, *Horæ Juridicæ*. Ranken's History of France to be looked at. Gregory of Tours, in Duchesne. Hénault's Abridgment of the History of France. Millot's ditto. D'Anquetil's History of France. Abbé de Mably's Observations, &c. Pfeffel, for German History. Stuart's View of Society. Koch on the Middle Ages, of which the last edition, in 1807, is the best.

In the Middle Ages the leading points are: 1st, Clovis (see Gibbon); 2d, Pepin (see Montesquieu); 3d, Charlemagne (*Latin Life of*, by Eginhard); 4th, Elective nature of the crown in Germany, and hereditary in France (Pfeffel and Mably); 5th, Temporal power of the Popes (Butler, — Koch, — Gibbon, 49th chap.); 6th, Feudal system (Montesquieu, but more particularly Mably, Robertson, Millar, and Stuart's View of Society); 7th, Chivalry (St. Palaye; his work to be found in the 20th volume of *Mémoires de l'Académie*); 8th, Popes and Emperors (Gibbon, — Koch, — Giannone, 5th chap. 19th book); 9th, Hanseatic League, &c. (Pfeffel); and 10th, the Crusades (Gibbon).

#### MAHOMET.

Sale's Koran, — Preface of, and Preliminary Dissertation, with a few chapters of the Koran itself. Prideaux's Life of Mahomet is not long, but seems not very good. The Modern Universal History may be looked at. 50th chap., &c., of Gibbon. White's Bampton Lectures. Ockley's History of the Saracens to be looked at.

#### FRENCH HISTORY.

Hénault and Millot, and D'Anquetil's History, to be read; and important subjects to be further considered in the great historians, Velly, Père Daniel, — but Velly recommended, a work of great detail and value, continued by Villaret, and afterwards by Garnier, but not yet half finished.

Robertson's Charles the Fifth, Introduction of. Smith's Wealth of Nations; the chapters in the 3d book, on Progress of Towns, &c., will give the student an idea of the progress of society in the Middle Ages.

#### ENGLISH HISTORY.

Tacitus's Agricola. Suetonius. Wilkins on Saxon Laws. Hume's Appendix. Millar on the English Constitution. Nicholson's Historical Library. Priestley's Lectures on History. De Lolme and Blackstone. Blackstone on the Charters to be read. Sullivan's Law Lectures, close of, for his observations on Magna Charta. Monkish historians by Twysden, Camden, Gale, &c. Lingard.

#### SPANISH HISTORY.

For the Moors, &c., in Spain, see Gibbon, chapters (in 5th vol. 4to) 51, 52, and a late work by Murphy. Mariana, the great historian, of whom there is a character in Gibbon, and a translation by Stevens. But the 16th and 17th vols. of the Modern History may be looked at, along with Mr. Gibbon's Outlines in the second volume of his Memoirs. Robertson's Introduction to Charles the Fifth. Then his Charles the Fifth, and Watson's Philip the Second.

Pfeffel, from Rodolph to Charles the Fifth, may be looked at, and Coxe's House of Austria, with Planta's History, for the rise of the House of Austria, the Swiss Cantons and Helvetic Confederacy; and for Italy and the Popes, the 69th and 70th chapters of Gibbon will be sufficient.

## FRENCH HISTORY, TO LOUIS THE TWELFTH.

Abbé de Mably. Robertson's Introduction to Charles the Fifth, and three Notes, 38, 39, 40. Parts of Philip de Comines, for Burgundy and Life of Louis the Eleventh. Notes taken by Hume of the French history.

## ENGLISH HISTORY, TO HENRY THE EIGHTH.

Hume's Reign of Edward the Third, pages 490 and 491, 8vo edit., compared with Cotton's Abridgment of the Records. Cobbett's Parliamentary History. Henry's History may be looked at, when Cotton, Brady, Tyrrell, Carte, cannot be consulted. Bacon's Life of Henry the Seventh. Monkish historians. Sir John Hayward. Lingard.

## REVIVAL OF LEARNING.—REFORMATION.

Introduction to the Literary History of the 14th and 15th Centuries (Cadell, 1798) worth looking at, and not long. Mosheim's State of Learning in the 13th and 14th Centuries. Gibbon, chapters 53 and 66. Lorenzo de' Medici, parts of, and more particularly of Leo the Tenth, by Roscoe.

Read the accounts of the Reformation, 1st, in Robertson's Charles the Fifth; 2d, history of Charles the Fifth, in Coxe's House of Austria; 3d, in the two chapters of Roscoe's Leo the Tenth; 4th, in the 54th chapter of Gibbon. Read the Introduction and first four chapters of Mosheim, in vol. 4 of our English edition; second part of Mosheim's history of Lutheran and Reformed Churches; and lastly, the first part of Mosheim, more particularly the close of it, for the history of the Romish Church. Villers's Prize Essay on the Reformation, more particularly on the influence of the Reformation, and the Appendix on the political situation of the states of Europe. Council of Trent (Father Paul), 2d book, and latter part of the 8th.

## REFORMATION IN ENGLAND.

For Wickliffe, see Henry's History of England, Neal's History of the Puritans, Fox's Martyrs, 3rd vol. of Mosheim, and Milner's Church History. Hume's account of our Reformation should be read, — and the same subject in Robertson's History of Scotland, and first Appendix in MacLaine's edition of Mosheim. Burnet's History of the Reformation should be read. Fox's Book of Martyrs, and Neal's History of the Puritans, should be consulted; in Fox, the account given of Lambert, Cranmer, and Anne Askew may be sufficient. M'Crie's History of the Reformation in Scotland should be referred to; and there is a very good account of Luther in Milner's Church History. Lingard's History.

## CIVIL AND RELIGIOUS WARS IN FRANCE.

Introduction to Thuanus or De Thou; then, the civil and ecclesiastical parts of the work that belong to the history of France; the military part may be slightly read; — the French translation is recommended. Brantôme, parts of. Memoirs of Sully, parts of. Wraxall's Memoirs of the House of Valois, and his History of France. Abbé de Mably. Edict of Nantes, 1st chapter of, for first introduction and persecution of Calvinism in France. Maimbourg's History of the League mentioned, but see Wraxall for the League. Esprit de la Ligue, by D'Anquetil (scarce book), partly incorporated into his present 8vo History, of 14 vols. There is a new work by Lacroix, in two volumes, Histoire de France pendant les Guerres de Religion.

## HENRY THE FOURTH, OF FRANCE.

Pérèfixe's Life. De Thou, Sully's Memoirs, Mably, and Wraxall recommended. Voltaire's Henriade. Fifth Book of Edict of Nantes, and the Edict, with the secret articles, to be read.



## RELIGIOUS WARS IN THE LOW COUNTRIES.

Grotius, Bentivoglio, Strača, — original authors. Brandt's History of the Reformation, a century after. Watson's Philip the Second, — all of it to be read, with the first four books and other parts of Bentivoglio. Bentivoglio, Strada, and Grotius to be read for the important period that preceded the coming of the Duke of Alva.

For the Arminian Controversy, 18th and 19th books of Brandt's History of the Reformation. For the Synod of Dort, 33d book. See also other parts of chapters 41, 42, 43, and Placard in 50th book. Brandt's work can only be consulted.

## THIRTY YEARS' WAR.

Harte's Gustavus Adolphus. Coxe's House of Austria.

The leading points of this subject seem to be, — 1. Contest between Roman Catholics and Reformers to the Peace of Passau; 2. Provisions of that Peace; 3. Conduct of the Protestant princes; 4. Ditto of the House of Austria; 5. Elector Palatine; 6. Gustavus Adolphus, &c.; 7. Campaigns of Tilly, &c.; 8. Continuance of the contest after Gustavus's death; 9. Peace of Westphalia.

Schiller's Thirty Years' War may be looked at; but Coxe seems the best author to be read in every respect.

## ENGLISH HISTORY. — HENRY THE EIGHTH. ELIZABETH. JAMES THE FIRST. CHARLES THE FIRST.

Herbert's Life of Henry the Eighth worth looking over. Hurd's Dialogue on Times of Queen Elizabeth. Miss Aikin's Memoirs of Elizabeth and James. Hume. Millar. Clarendon. Whitelocke. Ludlow. Life of Colonel Hutchinson. Parliamentary debates in Cobbett. History of Long Parliament by May. Rushworth's Collections. Nalson's ditto. Harris's Lives of James the First, Charles the First, Cromwell, and Charles the Second. Burnet. Laing's History of Scotland. Memoirs of Holles, of Sir Philip Warwick, and Sir John Berkley. Rapin always a substitute, in the absence of all others.

First interval, from accession of Charles to the dissolution of his third Parliament in 1629. Second interval, from 1629 to 1640. Third interval, from 1640 to the king's journey to Scotland in 1641. Fourth interval, from that journey to the civil war.

Prynne's speech in Cobbett. Walker's History of Independency to be looked at, and the king's letters in Royston's edition of his Works. Mrs. Macaulay's History, very laborious, — unfavorable to Charles.

## CROMWELL.

Conference at the end of Thurloe's State Papers, — a book which cannot be read, but may easily be consulted from a very good Index at the end. Ludlow, from the battle of Naseby, and pages 79, 105, and 135 of 4to edition, for Cromwell; and ditto Hutchinson, 287, 309, 340; and Whitelocke, 516 and 548. Sir Edward Walker's Historical Discourses, — most of it in Hume. Noble's Memoirs of the Cromwells may be looked at. Sir John Sinclair's History of the Revenue, for account of the expenses of the Long Parliament. Gumble's Life of Monk. Trial of the Regicides, short, and by all means to be read.

## CHARLES THE SECOND.

Harris's Lives, — all these Lives by Harris full of information and historical research. Neal's History of the Puritans, — 4, 5, 6, 7 chapters of the second part, 2d vol. Walker's Sufferings of the Clergy. Part of Clarendon's Life. Burnet's History of his own Times. Macpherson's Original Papers, and Dalrymple's Memoirs, vol. 2.

## CHARLES THE SECOND AND THE EXCLUSIONISTS.

Andrew Marvell's Account of Bribery, &c., given in Cobbett. Ralph's History, most minute and complete, always to be consulted for Charles the Second and James. Kennet's ditto, — mentioned as containing the king's Declaration or Appeal to the People. Sir William Jones's Reply, given in Cobbett.

## CHARLES THE SECOND.

Memoirs of Comte de Grammont. Dryden's Political Poems, — Absalom and Achitophel, &c. Hudibras, — Grey's Notes. Sermons and Public Papers of the Presbyterians. Laing's History of Scotland.

## REVOLUTION.

Fox's History. Macpherson and Dalrymple.

1st part of the general subject, — James's attack on the constitution and liberties of the country. 2d part, — Resistance made to him at home. 3d part, — Ditto from abroad, — 8th chapter of Somerville's History.

For William's enterprise, Burnet's Memoirs. 2d Earl of Clarendon's Diary, from p. 41. Sir John Reresby's Memoirs. Conference between the Houses, given in Cobbett. Somerville's History of William, &c. Ralph. D'Oyly's Life of San-croft.

## REIGN OF WILLIAM.

Somerville. Belsham. Tindal. Ralph. Burnet. Cobbett, 5th vol. Macpherson and Dalrymple. p. 331, vol. 9, Statutes, 8vo edit., for Triennial Bill. Blackstone, chap. 11, vol. 4, for the liberty of the press, — and 8th vol. of Statutes, 13 and 14 Charles II. chap. 33. Memoirs of the Duc de St. Simon, and 7th and 8th of Boling-broke's Letters on History, for William's foreign politics.

## AMERICA.—EAST AND WEST INDIES.

Robertson, Preface, with 5, 6, 7 chapters of the 1st vol. of Clavigero, and much of vol. 2, for Mexico. 2d vol. Churchill's Voyages, for Life of Columbus by his son. Italian collection of Ramusio, for original documents respecting America, &c. Second Letter of Cortés should be read, — there is a Latin translation of 2d and 3d Letters, very scarce. Bernal Diaz del Castillo should be read, — it is translated by Keatinge. Robertson's India. For Portuguese settlement, &c., in East Indies, see 57th chap. of Russell, and first three sections of 8th vol. Modern Universal History. For Brazils, Harris's Voyages, last edit., in 1740, is always quoted, differing from first editions entirely. For Dutch, &c., 33d chap. Modern Universal History, and 11th chap. Russell. For English, &c., Robertson's posthumous works, and first half of 1st vol. of Marshall's Life of Washington. Raynal, historical part of. Burke's European Settlements to be read. Hakluyt and Purchas, for first attempts of navigation, &c., — very curious and instructive. The latter volumes of Purchas contain original documents of the first conquerors, most of Las Casas's book, Mexican paintings, &c.

## FRENCH HISTORY FROM HENRY THE FOURTH TO THE END OF LOUIS THE FOURTEENTH.

Lives of Richelieu and Mazarin, by Aubery, — Ditto of Richelieu, by Le Clerc; but no good biographical account of those ministers. Many Memoirs with and without names; amongst the best are those of Madame de Motteville, — Montpensier, — Cardinal de Retz, — De Joly, son secrétaire, — De la Rochefoucauld, — De la Fare, — De Gourville, — De la Fayette: out of these have been formed other works, not long, and always read, — Esprit de la Ligue, — L'Intrigue du Cabinet, — Louis XIV., sa Cour, et le Régent, by D'Anquetil, — and L'Esprit de la Fronde, an established work, not by D'Anquetil, as had been supposed.

But for the times of Richelieu and Mazarin, see the chapters that relate to them in Russell, with those in the Modern Universal History, which will be sufficient, when



added to those in Voltaire, 175, 176 of his *Essai sur les Mœurs, &c.*, with the Abbé de Mably; but *L'Intrigue du Cabinet* also may be added. For Louis the Fourteenth the great work is *Mémoires du Duc de St. Simon*, published complete since the Revolution. Louis XIV., *sa Cour, et le Régent*, should be read, and the *Mémoires de Duclos*, with Voltaire's *Louis XIV.* *Le Vassor* is a work read and quoted in England, and may be consulted where the Huguenots are concerned. *Edict of Nantes*, part of 22d and 23d chapters; *Edicts, &c.*, at the end of the 5th vol., should be looked at for *Revocation of Edict of Nantes, &c.* Fénelon's *Télémaque*, parts of, for faults of Louis, and early appearance of present system of political economy. Lacroix's late work, *History of the Eighteenth Century*, preparatory to his *Précis of the late Revolution in France*, a work well spoken of. *Memoirs of Madame de Maintenon*, by Beaumelle, though decried by Voltaire, still maintains its ground.

### WILLIAM THE THIRD.

Somerville, on the whole, the best history of the reign we as yet have. Belsham will furnish proper topics of reflection, Tindal the detail, and Ralph even more than Tindal. Burnet must of course be read. Cobbett will supply the debates. There are several important tracts in the Appendix to the 5th vol. of his *Parliamentary History*. Macpherson and Dalrymple must be consulted. Some general conclusions, in the 21st chapter of Somerville, on Parties, &c., &c., seem objectionable.

For foreign politics, see *Memoirs of St. Simon*, Burnet, *Hardwicke Papers*, 7th and 8th of Lord Bolingbroke's *Letters on History*.

### ANNE.

Coxe's *Austria*. Eighth Letter of Bolingbroke. Torrey's *Memoirs*. Mably's *Droit de l'Europe*. Some chapters in the 3d vol. of *St. Simon*. Macpherson. *Trial of Dr. Sacheverell*.

For the Union with Scotland, see *De Foe's History*, a heavy 4to, — a book published by Bruce, under the direction of the Duke of Portland, at the time of the Union with Ireland, — *Works of Fletcher of Saltoun*. Cobbett's *Parliamentary History* and Somerville's account of the Union will be the best to read, with the first hundred pages of the third volume of Millar on the English Constitution.

### GEORGE THE FIRST AND SECOND. — SIR ROBERT WALPOLE.

Coxe's *Life of Sir Robert*, and his *Life of Horace Lord Walpole*. Bolingbroke's *Letters*, and *Letter to Sir William Wyndham*. Horace Walpole against Bolingbroke. *Parliamentary Debates*. Bolingbroke's *Patriot King*, and *Dissertation on Parties*, to be compared with *Burke's Thoughts on the Cause of the Present Discontents*. *London Magazine* and *Gentleman's Magazine*.

### FRANCE. — REGENCY OF THE DUKE OF ORLÉANS, ETC.

*Memoirs of the Duc de St. Simon*. Last volume of D'Alembert's *Louis XIV., sa Cour, et le Régent*. *Memoirs of Duclos*. *L'Histoire de Lacroix*. — And for the Mississippi Scheme of Law, look at *Steuart's Political Economy*. There is a great work on Finance, by Forbonnais, where the subject is thoroughly considered and is made tolerably intelligible. Adam Smith refers to Du Verney. — For South-Sea Bubble, see Coxe's *Sir Robert Walpole*, *Steuart's Political Economy*, Cobbett's *Parliamentary History*, Aislabie's *Second Defence before the Lords*, *Report of the Address, &c., &c.*

### KING OF PRUSSIA.

Thiébauld. *Edinburgh Review* of that work. *Towers's Life of the King of Prussia*. These will be sufficient for the general reader.

Mirabeau on the Prussian Monarchy, particularly the first vol. and last; read and criticize the general observations in other vols. of the work. Nothing of an historical nature in the letters between him and Voltaire.

The king gives in his own works an account of his own campaigns. Gillies's work is very indifferent.

## FRANCE.—LOUIS THE FIFTEENTH.

The detail of the history of this reign would be but the history of the king's mistresses and their favorites. The late work of Lacretelle, his *Histoire de France pendant le XVIII. Siècle*, will supply every information necessary for the general reader, and in a very agreeable manner. The financial disputes and the ecclesiastical disputes, both making up the disputes between the court and Parliaments, are the chief points, — these disputes, with the new opinions, uniting to produce the late French Revolution. The foreign politics may be gathered from Voltaire and Coxe's *Austria*, in a general manner. See also Duclos.

## PELHAM ADMINISTRATION.

Scotch Rebellion in 1745, — History of it, by Home. The book not thought equal to his fame, but it tells all that need now be known, and is in many places very interesting. Melcombe's *Diary*. Belsham.

## GEORGE THE THIRD.—OPENING OF THE REIGN.

Adolphus, Belsham, — neither without the other. Melcombe's *Diary*. Burke's *Thoughts on Present Discontents*.

## AMERICAN WAR.

Speeches in the two Houses, — George Grenville, Pitt, Governor Pownall, &c., &c., — see Cobbett's *Parliamentary History*. Examination of Mr. Penn. Dean Tucker's *Tracts* (the third particularly), and his *Cui Bono*. Pamphlet by Robinson, brother to the Primate. Ditto, by Dr. Johnson, *Taxation no Tyranny*. Burke's *Speeches*. Dr. Ramsay's *History of the American War*. Annual Register. Paine's *Common Sense*. Paper to have been presented to the king, in Burke's *Works*. Gibbon's *Memoirs*, — notices of the American contest in his letters. Bentivoglio, — speeches in the Spanish Council on the subject of the Low Countries, by the Duke of Alva, &c. Washington's *Letters*. Marshall's *Life of Washington*. Belsham and Adolphus, — neither without the other. Parts of the *Works of Franklin*, and of his *Correspondence*. The great magazine of information is *The Remembrancer*, a work of 20 volumes, drawn up by Almon, an opposition bookseller at the time, and the *Remembrancer* therefore chiefly offers to the remembrance such speeches and documents as are unfavorable to the councils of Great Britain. Gordon, 4 thick 8vo volumes, full of facts, and impartial, but with no other merit. The legal history of the Colonies may be found in Chalmers, a book which may be consulted, but cannot be read. Stedman wrote a *History of the American War*, — an actor in the scene, and a sensible man, but with ordinary views.

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Many histories and many political subjects have been passed by; but they who would look for more, or would think it advisable to turn aside from the course here proposed, may consult the volumes of the *Modern Universal History*, and they will find, either in the text or the references, every historical information they can well require.

Catalogues of great libraries — the Catalogue, for instance, of the Royal Institution in London — will give the student an immediate view of all the valuable books that refer to any particular subject of his inquiry.

Biography, though dealing too much in panegyric, is always more or less entertaining and instructive, often affording at the same time historical facts and traits of character that are by no means without their importance, though they may have escaped the general historian; these may also often be found in the histories of countries.

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Since this Syllabus was first drawn up, many works have appeared which should now find a place in it: — Hallam on the Middle Ages, — Sismondi, — Brodie, — vols. of Lingard's *History*, — more valuable editions of Clarendon and Burnet, — entertain-



ing and instructive works by Miss Aikin and Lord John Russell, — a work on the times of Charles the First and the Republic, by Godwin, — a valuable selection of the State Trials, by Phillips, — a most important work on the Constitutional History of this country, by Hallam, &c., &c., — a history of our own Revolution, by a French writer, Mazure, and a history of the times of Charles the First, by Guizot, — a Short History of Spain, by Mrs. Calcott, — a continuation of the Histories of Hume and Smollett, drawn up with diligence and ability, by Mr. Hughes, of Cambridge, — valuable publications by Coxe, Life of Marlborough, &c., — and a History of Ferdinand and Isabella, by Prescott, the American historian.

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On the subject of the French Revolution, the following works have been recommended as a short course: — Mignet, — Thiers, — Madame de Staël, — Account of Revolution in Dodsley's Annual Register, — Histoire de la Révolution Française, par deux Amis de la Liberté. To these may now be added, Sir Walter Scott's first two volumes of his Life of Napoleon.

Memoirs on the subject of the French Revolution are now publishing by the Baulouin Frères at Paris. The following may be more particularly mentioned: — Memoirs by M. de Ferrières, — Madame Roland, — Bailly, — Barbaroux, — Sur les Journées de Septembre, — Weber, — Hue, — Cléry, — Louvet, — Dumouriez, — Memoirs and Annals of the French Revolution, by Bertrand de Molleville, &c., &c.

The Speeches of Mirabeau should be looked at, and Necker's Works, for the earlier periods of the Revolution. There is a democratic work by Bailleul, written in opposition to the Considerations of Madame de Staël. There is a Précis of the Revolution, begun by Rabaut de St. Etienne and continued by Lacretelle. There is a useful work, Revue Chronologique de l'Histoire Française, from 1787 to 1818, by Montgailard, now expanded by the same writer into a regular history. There is a history by Toulangeon.

## A LIST

### OF SOME OF THE PRINCIPAL BOOKS RELATING TO THE HISTORY OF THE UNITED STATES, AND OF THE RESPECTIVE STATES.

PREPARED FOR THE AMERICAN EDITION.

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#### UNITED STATES.

- OLDMIXON's British Empire in America. 2 vols.  
Douglass's Political and Historical Summary. 2 vols.  
Burke's European Settlements in America. 2 vols.  
Wynne's General History of the British Empire in America. 2 vols.  
Chalmers's Political Annals of the United Colonies. 1 vol.  
Marshall's History of the American Colonies. 1 vol.  
Force's Tracts and other Papers, relating principally to the Origin, Settlement, and Progress of the Colonies in North America. 4 vols.  
Trumbull's General History of the United States. 1 vol. Unfinished.  
Ramsay's History of the United States. 3 vols.  
Holmes's Annals of America. 2 vols.  
Hale's History of the United States. 1 vol.  
Grahame's History of the United States. 4 vols. Comes down to the Declaration of Independence.  
Bancroft's History of the United States: Colonial History. 3 vols.  
Pitkin's Political and Civil History of the United States. 2 vols.  
Lyman's Diplomacy of the United States. 2 vols.  
Gibbs's Memoirs of the Administrations of Washington and John Adams. 2 vols.  
Moore's Memoirs of American Governors. 1 vol. Unfinished.  
Monette's History of the Discovery and Settlement of the Valley of the Mississippi. 2 vols.  
Perkins's Annals of the West, from the Discovery of the Mississippi Valley to the Year 1845. 1 vol.

#### MAINE.

- Sullivan's History of the District of Maine. 1 vol.  
Greenleaf's Statistical View of Maine. 1 vol.  
Williamson's History of the State of Maine. 2 vols.

#### NEW HAMPSHIRE.

- Belknap's History of New Hampshire. 3 vols. Also an edition with Farmer's notes.  
Barstow's History of New Hampshire. 1 vol.

#### VERMONT.

- Allen's History of Vermont. 1 vol.  
Williams's History of Vermont. 2 vols.  
Slade's Vermont State Papers. 1 vol.



## MASSACHUSETTS.

- Hutchinson's History of Massachusetts. 3 vols.  
 Minot's Continuation of Hutchinson. 2 vols.  
 Bradford's Continuation of Minot. 3 vols.  
 Baylies's Historical Memoir of the Colony of Plymouth. 2 vols.  
 Young's Chronicles of the Pilgrim Fathers of the Colony of Plymouth. 1 vol.; comprising several of the early tracts relating to the settlement of Plymouth.  
 Young's Chronicles of the First Planters of the Colony of Massachusetts Bay. 1 vol.

## RHODE ISLAND.

No regular History has been written. Many particulars concerning the early history are contained in the Collections of the Rhode Island Historical Society, in 5 vols.

## CONNECTICUT.

- Peters's General History of Connecticut. 1 vol. Contains many inaccuracies; the author was either credulous or insincere.  
 Trumbull's Complete History of Connecticut. 2 vols.  
 Bacon's Historical Discourses. 1 vol.

## NEW YORK.

- Smith's History of New York. 2 vols. The 2d volume constitutes the 4th of the Collections of the New York Historical Society.  
 Yates and Moulton's History of the State of New York. 1 vol. Unfinished.  
 Macauley's History of New York. 3 vols.  
 O'Callaghan's History of New Netherlands, or New York under the Dutch. 1 vol.  
 Dunlap's History of the New Netherlands, Province and State of New York, to the Adoption of the Federal Constitution. 2 vols.  
 Hammond's History of Political Parties in the State of New York. 2 vols.

## NEW JERSEY.

- Smith's History of the Colony of New Jersey. 1 vol.  
 Gordon's History of New Jersey. 1 vol.  
 Whitehead's East Jersey under the Proprietary Governments. 1 vol.

## PENNSYLVANIA.

- Proud's History of Pennsylvania. 2 vols.  
 Gordon's History of Pennsylvania. 1 vol.

## MARYLAND.

- Bozman's Sketch of the History of Maryland. 2 vols. Unfinished.  
 McMahon's Historical View of the Government of Maryland. 1 vol. Unfinished.  
 Hawks's Contributions to the Ecclesiastical History of the United States: vol. 2d, Maryland.

## VIRGINIA.

- Keith's History of the British Plantations in America. 1 vol. The first part only was published, which relates to Virginia.  
 Beverley's History of Virginia. 1 vol.  
 Stith's History of the First Discovery and Settlement of Virginia. 1 vol.  
 Jefferson's Notes on Virginia. 1 vol.  
 Campbell's (J. W.) History of Virginia. 1 vol.  
 Campbell's (Charles) Introduction to the History of the Colony and Ancient Dominion of Virginia. 1 vol.

Burk's History of Virginia (continued by Girardin). 4 vols.

Howison's History of Virginia. 2 vols.

Hawks's Contributions to the Ecclesiastical History of the United States: vol. 1st, Virginia.

#### NORTH CAROLINA.

Williamson's History of North Carolina. 2 vols.

Martin's History of North Carolina. 2 vols.

Foote's Sketches of North Carolina. 1 vol.

#### SOUTH CAROLINA.

Hewatt's Historical Account of South Carolina and Georgia. 2 vols. Also a recent edition with additional matter, edited by Mr. Carroll.

Ramsay's History of South Carolina. 2 vols.

Drayton's View of South Carolina. 1 vol.

#### GEORGIA.

Hewatt's Historical Account of South Carolina and Georgia. 2 vols.

McCall's History of Georgia. 2 vols.

Stevens's History of Georgia. 1 vol. Unfinished.

#### KENTUCKY.

Filson's Discovery, Settlement, and Present State of Kentucky. 1 vol.

Marshall's History of Kentucky. 2 vols.

Butler's History of the Commonwealth of Kentucky. 1 vol.

#### TENNESSEE.

Haywood's History of Tennessee. 1 vol.

#### LOUISIANA.

Du Pratz's History of Louisiana. 2 vols. Translated from the French.

Stoddard's Sketches Historical and Descriptive of Louisiana. 1 vol.

Marbois's History of Louisiana. 1 vol. Translated from the French; relating particularly to the cession of that Colony to the United States.

Martin's History of Louisiana. 2 vols.

Gayarré, Histoire de la Louisiane. 2 vols.

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Besides the above general works, many treatises have been published upon detached portions of history, and also local histories. Tracts and articles of great value are contained in the *Collections* published by the Historical Societies of some of the States. The Historical Society of Maine has published two volumes; New Hampshire, five; Massachusetts, thirty; Rhode Island, five; New York, five, the last of which is very important in regard to the history of the Dutch settlements; New Jersey, two; Pennsylvania, four; Ohio, two; Georgia, two; Virginia, some tracts.

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#### AMERICAN REVOLUTION.

Gordon's History of the Rise, Progress, and Establishment of the Independence of the United States. 4 vols.

Ramsay's History of the American Revolution. 2 vols.

Andrews's History of the War in America. 4 vols.

Stedman's History of the American War. 2 vols.

Warren's (Mrs.) History of the American Revolution. 3 vols.



- Marshall's Life of Washington. 5 vols.
- Botta's History of the War of Independence of the United States. 4 vols. Translated from the Italian.
- Thacher's Military Journal, during the American Revolutionary War. 1 vol.
- British Annual Register, from 1765 to 1783. The parts constituting the History of the American War were written principally, if not entirely, by Edmund Burke.
- Diplomatic Correspondence of the American Revolution; published by order of the Government, and edited by J. Sparks. 12 vols. Continuation to the adoption of the Constitution. 7 vols.
- Secret Journals of the Acts and Proceedings of the Old Congress. 4 vols.
- Madison's Papers, containing Letters and Sketches of Debates in the Old Congress, vol. 1st.
- Sanderson's Biography of the Signers to the Declaration of Independence. 9 vols. Second edition, in 5 vols.
- Sparks's Life and Writings of Washington. 12 vols.
- Sparks's Life and Writings of Franklin. 10 vols.
- Lee's Memoirs of the War in the Southern Department. 2 vols.
- Ramsay's History of the Revolution in South Carolina. 2 vols.
- Drayton's Memoirs of the American Revolution as relating to the State of South Carolina. 2 vols.
- Moultrie's Memoirs of the Revolution in North Carolina, South Carolina, and Georgia. 2 vols.
- Tarleton's History of the Campaigns in the Southern Provinces of North America. 1 vol.
- Hinman's Historical Collection, from Official Records, Files, &c., of the Part sustained by Connecticut during the War of the Revolution. 1 vol.
- Whiting's Revolutionary Orders of General Washington, 1778 - 82. 1 vol.
- Gilpin's Exiles in Virginia: with Observations on the Conduct of the Society of Friends during the Revolutionary War, comprising the Official Papers of the Government relating to that Period, 1777 - 78. 1 vol.

Besides these works of a general character, there are many volumes of biography, written by different hands, giving an account of the lives of some of the principal actors in the Revolution, and throwing light upon important events. Among these are the memoirs of Jefferson, Patrick Henry, Richard Henry Lee, James Otis, Quincy, Hamilton, Lafayette, Gerry, Jay, Gouverneur Morris, Greene, Hull, John Trumbull, Joseph Reed; and others in Sparks's Library of American Biography, in twenty-five volumes. Also, memoirs of the refugees, Van Schaack of New York (Life and Correspondence), Curwen of Massachusetts (Journal and Letters); with numerous others, in Sabine's American Loyalists.

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### CONSTITUTION.

- Journal, Acts, and Proceedings of the Convention which formed the Constitution of the United States. 1 vol.
- Secret Proceedings and Debates of the Convention. 1 vol.
- The Federalist, written by Hamilton, Madison, and Jay. 1 vol.
- Elliot's Debates, Resolutions, and other Proceedings in Convention, on the Adoption of the Federal Constitution. 4 vols. Containing the Debates in the Conventions of the several States.
- Rawle's View of the Constitution of the United States. 1 vol.
- Story's Commentaries on the Constitution of the United States. 3 vols.
- Madison's Papers, published by order of the Government; containing a Sketch of the Debates taken in the Convention which formed the Constitution, vols. 2d and 3d.

## CHRONOLOGICAL TABLE.

This Table is principally confined to events mentioned in the Lectures.

- A. D**
- 476. Rome taken by Odoacer. Extinction of the Western Empire.
  - 481. Clovis, King of the Franks; founder of the Merovingian race.
  - 570. Birth of Mahomet. (Died 632.)
  - 622. The Hegira.
  - 715. Charles Martel, Mayor of the Palace, governs all France.
  - 752. Pepin le Bref, King of France; founder of the Carolingian race.
  - 778. Battle of Roncesvalles.
  - 827. End of the Saxon Heptarchy.
  - 1066. England conquered by the Normans.
  - 1070. Feudal System introduced into England.
  - 1096. The First Crusade to the Holy Land, under Peter the Hermit.
  - 1146. The Second Crusade.
  - 1160. The Albigensian heresy breaks out.
  - 1188. The Third Crusade, under Frederic Barbarossa, Richard the First, and Philip Augustus.
  - 1195. The Fourth Crusade.
  - 1198. The Fifth Crusade.
  - 1204. The Inquisition established by Pope Innocent the Third.
  - 1208. Crusade against the Albigenses, under Simon de Montfort.
  - 1215. Magna Charta signed by King John.
  - 1228. The Sixth Crusade.
  - 1241. Hanseatic League formed.
  - 1248. The Seventh Crusade, under St. Louis.
  - 1264. The Burgesses first summoned to Parliament in England.
  - 1270. The Eighth Crusade.
  - 1273. Rodolph of Hapsburg, Emperor of Germany; first of the House of Austria.
  - 1297. Sir William Wallace defeats the English at Stirling. Is put to death, 1305.
  - 1307. Establishment of the Helvetic Confederacy.
  - 1314. Edward the Second defeated at Bannockburn.
  - 1320. Gunpowder invented by Schwartz, a monk.
  - 1346. Battle of Crecy, won by Edward the Third and the Black Prince over the French.
  - 1356. Battle of Poitiers.
  - 1372. Wickliffe preaches in England.
  - 1394. The Jews banished from France by Charles the Sixth.
  - 1415. Henry the Fifth invades Normandy; defeats the French at Agincourt.
  - 1415. John Huss burned for heresy.
  - 1429. Joan of Arc compels the English to raise the siege of Orléans.
  - 1431. Henry the Sixth of England crowned King of France.
  - 1436. Paris retaken by the French.
  - 1440. Invention of Printing.
  - 1453. Constantinople taken by the Turks. Extinction of the Eastern Empire.
  - 1485. Battle of Bosworth; death of Richard the Third.
  - 1492. America discovered by Columbus.
  - 1513. Battle of Flodden.
  - 1517. Reformation in Germany begun by Luther.
  - 1519. Francis the First and Charles the Fifth competitors for the Imperial throne.
  - 1529. Diet of Spires, against the Huguenots, then first termed Protestants.



- 1531. Pizarro invades Peru.
- 1534. The Reformation in England, in the reign of Henry the Eighth.
- 1545. Council of Trent begins, which continued eighteen years.
- 1548. The "Interim" granted to the Protestants by Charles the Fifth of Germany.
- 1552. Treaty of Passau between Charles the Fifth and the Protestant princes, for the establishment of Protestantism.
- 1555. Religious Peace established.
- 1560. Reformation in Scotland under John Knox.
- 1562. Beginning of the Civil Wars in France, between the Prince of Condé and the Dukes of Guise.
- 1566. Revolt of the Netherlands from Philip the Second.
- 1567. Duke of Alva sent to quell it.
- 1572. Massacre of St. Bartholomew, August 24th.
- 1576. The League in France, against the Protestants. William, Prince of Orange, declared Stadtholder by the United States of Netherlands.
- 1579. Commencement of the Republic of Holland by the Union of Utrecht.
- 1584. Prince of Orange murdered at Delft.
- 1588. Duke of Guise assassinated.
- 1589. Henry the Third, of France, assassinated by Clément.
- 1590. Battle of Ivry, destruction of the League.
- 1598. Edict of Nantes, tolerating Protestants in France.
- 1610. Henry the Fourth assassinated by Ravallac.
- 1618. The Thirty Years' War begins, in Germany.
- 1620. Bohemians defeated at Prague; the Elector Palatine loses Bohemia.
- 1625. First English settlement in the West Indies. Discord between Charles the First and the House of Commons; Dissolution of his First Parliament. League of the Protestant princes against the Emperor.
- 1626. Charles the First dissolves his Second Parliament.
- 1629. Charles the First dissolves his Third Parliament.
- 1630. Gustavus Adolphus enters Germany.
- 1632. Gustavus Adolphus killed at the battle of Lützen.
- 1638. The Solemn League and Covenant established in Scotland.
- 1640. The Long Parliament in England meets.
- 1641. Earl of Strafford beheaded.
- 1642. Civil War in England begins.
- 1645. Charles the First defeated at Naseby, June 14th.
- 1647. Charles delivered up by the Scots.
- 1649. Charles beheaded. Commonwealth begins.
- 1650. Covenanters defeated by Cromwell at Dunbar.
- 1651. Charles the Second defeated at Worcester.
- 1652. First war between England and Holland.
- 1653. Cromwell dissolves the Parliament; is proclaimed Protector, December 16th.
- 1658. Richard Cromwell succeeds him.
- 1660. Restoration of Charles the Second.
- 1665. Second war with Holland. Great Plague in London.
- 1666. Great Fire in London.
- 1672. Louis the Fourteenth conquers a great part of Holland. The Prince of Orange made Stadtholder.
- 1679. The Long Parliament of Charles the Second dissolved. The Habeas Corpus Act passed.
- 1680. Lord Stafford beheaded.
- 1683. Rye-house Plot. Execution of Lord Russell, July 21st, and Algernon Sidney, December 7th.
- 1685. Revocation of the Edict of Nantes by Louis the Fourteenth.
- 1688. Revolution in England. James the Second leaves the kingdom.
- 1689. William and Mary proclaimed. Episcopacy abolished in Scotland by William Battle of Killiecrankie, July 27th; William defeated.
- 1690. Battle of the Boyne, in Ireland, July 1st; James defeated.
- 1692. French fleet defeated by the English at Cape la Hogue, May 22d. Battle of Steenkirk, July 24th; King William defeated by Luxembourg.
- 1695. Namur taken by William.
- 1697. Peace of Ryswick, September 20th.
- 1698. First Treaty of Partition.

- 1701. Death of James the Second at St. Germain.
- 1702. War of Succession against France and Spain, under Anne.
- 1704. Battle of Blenheim, August 2d; the French defeated by Marlborough and Prince Eugene of Savoy.
- 1706. Battle of Ramillies, May 12th; the French defeated by Marlborough. The Treaty of Union between England and Scotland signed, July 22d.
- 1707. French and Spaniards defeat the Allies at Almanza, April 14th.
- 1708. French defeated by Marlborough and Prince Eugene, at Oudenarde, June 30th.
- 1713. Peace of Utrecht.
- 1715. Rebellion in Scotland, under James the Pretender.
- 1716. Philip, Duke of Orléans, Regent of France.
- 1719. The Mississippi scheme of John Law.
- 1720. South-Sea scheme.
- 1740. Charles the Sixth dies. War in Germany begins.
- 1741. The Prussians masters of Silesia.
- 1742. Peace between Austria and Prussia.
- 1743. War in Germany, between the British, Hungarians, French, and Austrians.
- 1744. War between Great Britain and France.
- 1745. Louisburg and Cape Breton taken by the British forces, June 17th. Rebellion breaks out in Scotland, August. Defeat of the King's forces by the Rebels at Preston Pans, September 21st.
- 1746. Defeat of the King's forces by the Rebels at Falkirk, January 17th. Battle of Culloden, April 16th. End of the Scotch Rebellion.
- 1748. Peace of Aix-la-Chapelle, between Great Britain, France, Spain, Austria, Sardinia, and Holland, October 7th.
- 1756. The King of Prussia invades Saxony. Seven Years' War begins.
- 1757. Battle of Prague, May 6th; King of Prussia defeats the Austrians. The King of Prussia takes Breslau and becomes master of Silesia, December 20th.
- 1760. English become masters of Canada, September 8th.
- 1765. American Stamp-Act passed. Repealed the next year.
- 1774. Boston Port-Bill passed.
- 1775. Hostilities in America begin at Lexington, April 19th. Battle of Bunker's Hill, June 17th.
- 1776. General Howe leaves Boston, March 17th. Independence declared, July 4th. Battle on Long Island, August 27th. New York evacuated, September 15th. Battle at Trenton, December 26th.
- 1777. Ticonderoga taken by Burgoyne, July 6th. Battle of the Brandywine, September 11th. Philadelphia taken, September 26th. Battle of Germantown, October 4th. Burgoyne's army surrenders at Saratoga, October 17th.
- 1778. Treaty between France and America, February 6th.
- 1779. Stony Point taken by assault, July 15th. Expedition against the Indians under Sullivan.
- 1780. Battle of Springfield, June 23d. French army arrives at Newport, July 10th. Defeat at Camden, August 16th.
- 1781. Americans defeated by Cornwallis at Guilford, March 15th. Surrender of Cornwallis at Yorktown, October 19th.
- 1782. Preliminary Articles of the Treaty of Peace signed at Paris, November 30th.
- 1783. Peace between Great Britain and America ratified; Independence of America recognized, September 3d.



# TABLE

OF

## THE CONTEMPORARY SOVEREIGNS

OF

ENGLAND, SCOTLAND, FRANCE, GERMANY, RUSSIA, AND SPAIN, AND OF THE  
POPE.

[From Sir Harris Nicolas's "Chronology of History," corrected by "L'Art de vérifier les Dates," etc.]

A. D.	ENGLAND	FRANCE	GERMANY	PAPAL STATES	RUSSIA	SPAIN	SCOTLAND
800	.....	Charle- magne	Charle- magne	Leo III.	.....	Alfonso II. <i>Oviedo</i>	Achaisus
814	.....	Louis I.	Louis I.				
816	.....			Stephen IV.			
817	.....			Pascal I.			
819	.....						Congal III.
824	.....			Eugene II.	.....	.....	Dongal
827	Egbert			Valentine			
—	.....			Gregory IV.			
833	.....				.....	.....	Alpin
836	.....				.....	.....	Kenneth II.
837	Ethelwolf						
840	.....	Charles I.					
842	.....				.....	Ramiro I. <i>Oviedo</i>	
843	.....		Louis II.				
844	.....			Sergius II.			
847	.....			Leo IV.			
850	.....				.....	Ordoño I. <i>Oviedo</i>	
855	.....			Benedict III.		Garcia XI- menes	
857	.....				.....	<i>Navarre</i>	
858	Ethelbald & Ethelbert			Nicholas I.			Donald III.
859	.....				.....		
860	Ethelbert						
862	.....				Rurik		
863	.....						Constantine
866	Ethelred I.				.....	Alfonso III. <i>Oviedo</i>	[II]
867	.....			Adrian II.			
871	Alfred						
872	.....			John VIII.			
876	.....		Carloman, Louis III., & Charles II.				
877	.....	Louis II.					
879	.....	Louis III. & Carloman		.....	Igor I.		
880	.....		Louis III. & Charles II.		.....	Fortun <i>Navarre</i>	
882	.....	Carloman	Charles II.	Marin	.....		Hugh
—	.....				.....		Grig & Eth
884	.....	Charles II.		Adrian III.			
885	.....			Stephen V.			
887	.....	Hugh	Arnold				
891	.....			Formosus			
893	.....				.....	.....	Donald IV.
896	.....	Hugh & Charles III.		Boniface VI.			
—	.....						
897	.....			Stephen VI.			
898	.....	Charles III.		Romanus			
—	.....			Theodore II.			
—	.....			John IX.			

## TABLE OF CONTEMPORARY SOVEREIGNS:

A. D.	ENGLAND	FRANCE	GERMANY	PAPAL STATES	RUSSIA	SPAIN	SCOTLAND
899		.....	Louis IV.				
900	Edward the Elder	.....	.....	Benedict IV.			
903	.....	.....	.....	Leo V.			
—	.....	.....	.....	Christopher			
904	.....	.....	.....	Sergius III.	.....	.....	Constantine [III.]
905	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	Sancho I. <i>Navarre</i>	
910	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	Garcia	
911	.....	.....	Conrad I.	Anastasius III.	.....	<i>Oviedo</i>	
913	.....	.....	.....	Lando	.....		
914	.....	.....	.....	John X.	.....	Ordoño II. <i>Leon</i>	
919	.....	.....	Henry I.	.....	.....		
922	.....	Robert I.	.....	.....	.....	Fruela II. <i>Leon</i>	
923	.....	Ralph	.....	.....	.....	Alfonso IV. <i>Leon</i>	
924	Athelstan	.....	.....	.....	.....	Garcia I. <i>Navarre</i>	
925	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	Ramiro II. <i>Leon</i>	
927	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....		
928	.....	.....	.....	Leo VI.			
929	.....	.....	.....	Stephen VII.			
931	.....	.....	.....	John XI.			
936	.....	Louis IV.	Otho I.	Leo VII.			
939	.....	.....	.....	Stephen VIII.			
940	Edmund I.	.....	.....	.....			
942	.....	.....	.....	Martin III.			
944	.....	.....	.....	.....	Sviatoslaf I.	.....	Malcolm I.
945	.....	.....	.....	.....			
946	Edred	.....	.....	Agapet II.	.....	Ordoño III. <i>Leon</i>	
950	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	Indulf
953	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	
954	.....	Lothaire	.....	.....	.....	.....	
955	Edwy	.....	.....	.....	.....	Sancho I. <i>Leon</i>	
956	.....	.....	.....	John XII.	.....	.....	
959	Edgar	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	Duff
961	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	
963	.....	.....	.....	Leo VIII.	.....	.....	Culen
965	.....	.....	.....	John XIII.	.....	Ramiro III. <i>Leon</i>	
967	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	Sancho II. <i>Navarre</i>	Kenneth III.
970	.....	.....	.....	Benedict VI.	.....	.....	
972	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	
973	.....	.....	Otho II.	Domnus II.	Iarópolk I.	.....	
974	.....	.....	.....	Benedict VII.	.....	.....	
975	Edward the Martyr	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	
978	Ethelred II.	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	
980	.....	.....	.....	.....	Vladimir I.	.....	
982	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	Bermudo II. <i>Leon</i>	
983	.....	.....	Otho III.	John XIV.	.....	.....	
985	.....	.....	.....	John XV.	.....	.....	
—	.....	.....	.....	John XVI.	.....	.....	
986	.....	Louis V.	.....	.....	.....	.....	
987	.....	Hugh Capet	.....	.....	.....	.....	
994	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	Garcia II. <i>Navarre</i>	Constantine [IV.]
995	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	Kenneth IV. (the Grim)
996	.....	Robert II.	.....	Gregory V.	.....	.....	
999	.....	.....	.....	Silvester II.	.....	Alfonso V. <i>Leon</i>	
1000	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	Sancho III. <i>Navarre</i>	
1002	.....	.....	Henry II.	.....	.....	.....	
1003	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	Malcolm II
—	.....	.....	.....	John XVII.	.....	.....	
1009	.....	.....	.....	John XVIII.	.....	.....	
1012	.....	.....	.....	Sergius IV.	.....	.....	
1014	Sweyn	.....	.....	Benedict VIII.	.....	.....	
1015	Ethelred II. (restored)	.....	.....	.....	Sviatopolk [I.]	.....	
1016	Edmund Ironside & Canute	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	
1017	Canute	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	



# TABLE OF CONTEMPORARY SOVEREIGNS.

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A. D.	ENGLAND	FRANCE	GERMANY	PAPAL STATES	RUSSIA	SPAIN	SCOTLAND
1019	.....	.....	.....	.....	Iaroslav I.	.....	.....
1024	.....	.....	Conrad II.	John XIX.	.....	.....	.....
1027	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	Bermudo III.	.....
1031	.....	Henry I.	.....	.....	.....	Leon	.....
1033	.....	.....	.....	Benedict IX.	.....	Ferdinand I.	Duncan I.
1035	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	Castile	.....
—	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	Garcia III.	.....
1036	Harold I.	.....	.....	.....	.....	Navarre	.....
1037	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	Ramiro I.	.....
1039	.....	.....	Henry III.	.....	.....	Aragon	.....
1040	Hardicanute	.....	.....	.....	.....	Ferdinand I.	Macbeth
1042	Edward the Confessor	.....	.....	.....	.....	Cast. & Le.	.....
1044	.....	.....	.....	Gregory VI.	.....	.....	.....
1046	.....	.....	.....	Clement II.	.....	.....	.....
1048	.....	.....	.....	Damasus II.	.....	.....	.....
—	.....	.....	.....	Leo IX.	.....	.....	.....
1054	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	Sancho IV.	.....
1055	.....	.....	.....	Victor II.	Isiaslaf I.	Navarre	.....
1056	.....	.....	Henry IV.	.....	.....	.....	.....
1057	.....	.....	.....	Stephen IX.	.....	.....	Malcolm
1058	.....	.....	.....	Nicholas II.	.....	.....	(III.)
1060	.....	Philip I.	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
1061	.....	.....	.....	Alexander II.	.....	.....	.....
1063	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	Sancho I.	.....
1065	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	Aragon	.....
—	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	Alfonso VI.	.....
1066	Harold II.	.....	.....	.....	.....	Le. & Cast.	.....
—	William I.	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
1072	.....	.....	.....	Gregory VII.	[II.]	Alfonso VI.	.....
1073	.....	.....	.....	.....	Sviatoslaf	Le. & Cast.	.....
1074	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
1076	.....	.....	.....	.....	Isiaslaf I.	Sancho V.	.....
1077	.....	.....	.....	.....	(restored)	(I. of Arag.)	.....
1078	.....	.....	.....	.....	Vsevolod I.	Navarre	.....
1086	.....	.....	.....	Victor III.	.....	.....	.....
1087	William II.	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
1088	.....	.....	.....	Urban II.	[II.]	.....	.....
1093	.....	.....	.....	.....	Sviatopolk	.....	Donald VI.
1094	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	Peter I.	Duncan II.
1095	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	Nav. & Ar.	.....
1098	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	Donald VI.
1099	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	(restored)
1100	Henry I.	.....	.....	Pascal II.	.....	.....	Edgar
1104	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
1106	.....	.....	Henry V.	.....	.....	Alfonso I.	.....
1107	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	Nav. & Ar.	.....
1108	.....	Louis VI.	.....	.....	.....	.....	Alexander I.
1109	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
1113	.....	.....	.....	.....	Vladimir II.	Urraca	.....
1118	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	Cast. & Le.	.....
1119	.....	.....	.....	Gelasius II.	.....	.....	.....
1124	.....	.....	.....	Calixtus II.	.....	.....	.....
1125	.....	.....	Lothaire II.	Honorius II.	.....	.....	David I.
1126	.....	.....	.....	.....	Mstislaf	.....	.....
1130	.....	.....	.....	Innocent II.	.....	Alfonso VII.	.....
1132	.....	.....	.....	.....	Iaropolk II.	Cast. & Le.	.....
1134	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	Garcia IV.	.....
—	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	Navarre	.....
1135	Stephen	.....	.....	.....	.....	Ramiro II.	.....
1137	.....	Louis VII.	.....	.....	.....	Aragon	.....
1138	.....	.....	Conrad III.	.....	.....	Petronilla &	.....
1140	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	Raymondo	.....
—	.....	.....	.....	.....	Viatcheslaf	Aragon	.....
1143	.....	.....	.....	Celestine II.	Vsevolod II.	.....	.....
1144	.....	.....	.....	Lucius II.	.....	.....	.....
1145	.....	.....	.....	Eugene III.	.....	.....	.....

A. D.	ENGLAND	FRANCE	GERMANY	PAPAL STATES	RUSSIA	SPAIN	SCOTLAND
1147	.....	.....	.....	.....	Igor II.	.....	.....
—	.....	.....	.....	.....	Isiaslaf II.	.....	.....
1149	.....	.....	.....	.....	Iouri I.	.....	.....
1150	.....	.....	.....	.....	Isiaslaf II.	Sancho VI.	.....
1152	.....	.....	Frederic I.	.....	(restored)	<i>Navarre</i>	.....
1153	.....	.....	.....	Anastasius IV.	.....	.....	Malcolm IV.
1154	Henry II.	.....	.....	Adrian IV.	Rostislaf	.....	.....
—	.....	.....	.....	.....	Isiaslaf III.	.....	.....
—	.....	.....	.....	.....	Iouri I.	.....	.....
1157	.....	.....	.....	.....	(restored)	.....	.....
—	.....	.....	.....	.....	Andrei I.	Sancho III.	.....
—	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	<i>Castile</i>	.....
1158	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	Ferd. II.	.....
1159	.....	.....	.....	Alexander III.	.....	<i>Leon</i>	.....
1162	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	Alfons. VIII.	.....
1165	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	<i>Castile</i>	.....
1175	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	Alfonso II.	.....
1177	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	<i>Aragon</i>	.....
1180	.....	Philip II.	.....	.....	Mikhail I.	.....	William
1181	.....	.....	.....	.....	Vsevolod	.....	.....
1185	.....	.....	.....	.....	III.	.....	.....
1187	.....	.....	.....	Lucius III.	.....	.....	.....
—	.....	.....	.....	Urban III.	.....	.....	.....
1188	.....	.....	.....	Gregory VIII.	.....	Alfonso IX.	.....
1189	Richard I.	.....	.....	Clement III.	.....	<i>Leon</i>	.....
1190	.....	.....	Henry VI.	.....	.....	.....	.....
1191	.....	.....	.....	Celestine III.	.....	Sancho VII.	.....
1194	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	<i>Navarre</i>	.....
1196	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	Peter II.	.....
1198	.....	.....	Phillip and	Innocent III.	.....	<i>Aragon</i>	.....
1199	John	.....	Otho IV.	.....	.....	.....	.....
1203	.....	.....	Otho IV.	.....	.....	.....	.....
1212	.....	.....	Frederic II.	.....	Iouri II.	James I.	.....
1213	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	<i>Aragon</i>	.....
1214	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	Henry I.	Alexander
1216	Henry III.	.....	.....	Honorius III.	.....	<i>Castile</i>	[II.]
1217	.....	.....	.....	.....	Constantine	Ferd. III.	.....
1218	.....	.....	.....	.....	Iouri II.	<i>Castile</i>	.....
1223	.....	Louis VIII.	.....	.....	(restored)	.....	.....
1226	.....	Louis IX.	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
1227	.....	.....	.....	Gregory IX.	.....	Ferd. III.	.....
1230	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	<i>Cast. &amp; Le.</i>	.....
1234	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	Theobald I.	.....
1237	.....	.....	.....	.....	Iaroslaf II.	<i>Navarre</i>	.....
1241	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
1243	.....	.....	.....	Celestine IV.	.....	.....	.....
1247	.....	.....	.....	Innocent IV.	III.	.....	.....
1249	.....	.....	.....	.....	Sviatoslaf	.....	.....
1250	.....	.....	.....	.....	Andrei II.	.....	Alexander
1251	.....	.....	Conrad IV.	.....	.....	.....	[III.]
1252	.....	.....	.....	.....	Alexander	.....	.....
1253	.....	.....	.....	.....	Nevski	Alfonso X.	.....
1254	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	<i>Cast. &amp; Le.</i>	.....
1257	.....	.....	William of	Alexander IV.	.....	Theobald II.	.....
1261	.....	.....	Holland	.....	.....	<i>Navarre</i>	.....
1264	.....	.....	Richard, E.	Urban IV.	.....	.....	.....
1265	.....	.....	of Cornwall	.....	Iaroslaf III.	.....	.....
1266	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
1270	.....	.....	.....	Clement IV.	.....	.....	.....
1271	.....	Philip III.	.....	.....	.....	Henry I.	.....
1272	Edward I.	.....	.....	Gregory X.	.....	<i>Navarre</i>	.....
1273	.....	.....	.....	.....	Vassili I.	.....	.....
1274	.....	.....	Rodolph of	.....	.....	.....	.....
—	.....	.....	Hapsburg	.....	.....	Joanna I.	.....
1276	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	<i>Navarre.</i>	.....
—	.....	.....	.....	Innocent V.	Dmitri I.	Peter III.	.....
—	.....	.....	.....	Adrian V.	.....	<i>Aragon</i>	.....



A. D.	ENGLAND	FRANCE	GERMANY	PAPAL STATES	RUSSIA	SPAIN	SCOTLAND
1276	.....	.....	.....	John XXI.			
1277	.....	.....	.....	Nicholas III.			
1281	.....	.....	.....	Martin IV.			
1234	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	Sancho IV. <i>Cast. &amp; Le.</i>	
1285	.....	Philip IV.	.....	Honorius IV.	.....	Alfonso III. <i>Aragon</i>	
1286	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	Margaret
1288	.....	.....	.....	Nicholas IV.	.....	James II. <i>Aragon</i>	
1291	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	John Balliol
1292	.....	.....	Adolphus of Nassau	.....	.....	.....	
1294	.....	.....	.....	Celestine V.	Andrei III.		
—	.....	.....	.....	Boniface VIII.	.....		
1295	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	Ferd. IV. <i>Cast. &amp; Le.</i>	
1296	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	Interregnum
1298	.....	.....	Albert of Austria	.....	.....		
1303	.....	.....	.....	Benedict XI.			
1304	.....	.....	.....	.....	Mikhail II.		
1305	.....	.....	.....	Clement V.	.....	Louis (X. France) <i>Navarre</i>	
1306	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	Robert I.
1307	Edward II.	.....	.....	.....	.....		
1308	.....	.....	Henry VII.	.....	.....		
1312	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	Alfonso XI. <i>Cast. &amp; Le.</i>	
1314	.....	Louis X.	Frederic III. & Louis V.	.....	.....	.....	
1316	.....	John I. Philip V.	.....	John XXII.	.....	Philip I. (V. France) <i>Navarre</i>	
—	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	Charles I. (IV. France) <i>Navarre</i>	
1320	.....	Charles IV.	.....	.....	Iouri III.	.....	
1322	.....	.....	.....	.....	Dmitri II.	.....	
1323	.....	.....	.....	.....	Alexander [II.]	.....	
1324	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	Alfonso IV. <i>Aragon</i>	
1327	Edward III.	.....	.....	.....	.....	Joanna II. & Philip II. <i>Navarre</i>	
1328	.....	Philip VI.	.....	.....	Ivan I.	.....	
1329	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	David II. [Edward Balliol usurped in 1322, but was deposed in the same year.]
1330	.....	.....	Louis V.	.....	.....		
1334	.....	.....	.....	Benedict XII.	.....	Peter IV. <i>Aragon</i>	
1335	.....	.....	.....	.....	Semen	.....	
1341	.....	.....	.....	Clement VI.	.....	Joanna II. <i>Navarre</i>	
1342	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	Charles II. <i>Navarre</i>	
1343	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	Peter the Cruel	
1347	.....	.....	Charles IV.	.....	.....	Cast. & Le.	
1349	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	
1350	.....	John II.	.....	.....	.....	Henry II. <i>Cast. &amp; Le.</i>	
1352	.....	.....	.....	Innocent VI.	.....	.....	
1353	.....	.....	.....	.....	Ivan II.	.....	
1360	.....	.....	.....	.....	Dmitri III. & Dmitri IV.	.....	
1362	.....	.....	.....	Urban V.	.....	.....	
1364	.....	Charles V.	.....	.....	.....	.....	
1368	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	
1370	.....	.....	.....	Gregory XI.	.....	.....	Robert II.
1371	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	
1377	Richard II.	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	
1378	.....	.....	Wenceslaus	Urban VI.	.....	John I. <i>Cast. &amp; Le.</i>	
1379	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	Charles III. <i>Navarre</i>	
1380	.....	Charles VI.	.....	.....	.....	John I. <i>Aragon</i>	
1387	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	Henry III. <i>Cast. &amp; Le.</i>	
—	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	Martin <i>Aragon</i>	
1389	.....	.....	.....	Boniface IX.	Vassili II.	.....	Robert III.
1390	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	
1395	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	
1399	Henry IV.	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	
1400	.....	.....	Robert	.....	.....	.....	
1404	.....	.....	.....	Innocent VII.	.....	.....	

A. D.	ENGLAND	FRANCE	GERMANY	PAPAL STATES	RUSSIA	SPAIN	SCOTLAND
1406	.....	.....	.....	Gregory XII.	.....	John II.	James I.
1409	.....	.....	.....	Alexander V.	.....	<i>Cast. &amp; Le.</i>	
1410	.....	.....	.....	John XXIII.	.....		
1411	.....	.....	Sigismund	.....	.....	Ferdinand I.	
1412	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	<i>Aragon</i>	
1413	Henry V.	.....	.....	.....	.....	Alfonso V.	
1416	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	<i>Aragon</i>	
1417	.....	.....	.....	Martin V.	.....		
1422	Henry VI.	Charles VII.	.....	.....	Vassili III.	Blanche &	
1425	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	John II.	
1431	.....	.....	.....	Eugene IV.	.....	<i>Navarre</i>	James II.
1437	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	
1438	.....	.....	Albert II.	.....	.....	.....	
1440	.....	.....	Frederic IV.	.....	.....	John II.	
1441	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	<i>Navarre</i>	
1447	.....	.....	.....	Nicholas V.	.....	Henry IV.	
1454	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	<i>Cast. &amp; Le.</i>	
1455	.....	.....	.....	Calixtus III.	.....	John II.	
1458	.....	.....	.....	Pius II.	.....	<i>Ar. &amp; Nav.</i>	
1460	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	James III.
1461	Edward IV.	Louis XI.	.....	.....	Ivan III.	.....	
1462	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	
1464	.....	.....	.....	Paul II.	.....	.....	
1471	.....	.....	.....	Sixtus IV.	.....	.....	
1474	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	Ferd. V.	
1479	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	(II. of Ar.)	
—	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	& Isabella	
—	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	<i>Cast. &amp; Le.</i>	
1483	Edward V.	Charles	.....	.....	.....	Ferd. II.	
—	Richard III.	[VIII.]	.....	.....	.....	<i>Aragon</i>	
1484	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	Eleanor	
1485	Henry VII.	.....	.....	Innocent VIII.	.....	<i>Navarre</i>	
1488	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	Fran. Phœ-	
1492	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	bis, <i>Nav.</i>	
1493	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	Catharine	
1498	.....	Louis XII.	.....	.....	.....	<i>Navarre</i>	
1503	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	James IV.
—	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	
1504	.....	.....	.....	Pius III.	.....	Philip I.	
1506	.....	.....	.....	Julius II.	.....	<i>Castile</i>	
1506	.....	.....	.....	.....	Vassili IV.	Ferd. V.	
1509	Henry VIII.	.....	.....	.....	.....	Regent <i>Cast</i>	
1513	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	James V.
1515	.....	Francis I.	.....	Leo X.	.....	.....	
1516	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	Charles I.	
1519	.....	.....	Charles V.	.....	.....	(V. Germ.)	
1522	.....	.....	.....	Adrian VI.	.....	.....	
1523	.....	.....	.....	Clement VII.	Ivan IV.	.....	
1533	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	Mary
1534	.....	.....	.....	Paul III.	.....	.....	
1542	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	
1547	Edward VI.	Henry II.	.....	Julius III.	.....	.....	
1550	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	
1553	Jane	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	
—	Mary	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	
1555	.....	.....	.....	Marcellus II.	.....	.....	
—	.....	.....	.....	Paul IV.	.....	.....	
1556	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	Phillip II.	
1558	Elizabeth	.....	Ferdinand I.	.....	.....	.....	
1559	.....	Francis II.	.....	Pius IV.	.....	.....	
1560	.....	Charles IX.	.....	.....	.....	.....	
1564	.....	.....	[II.]	.....	.....	.....	
1566	.....	.....	Maximilian	Pius V.	.....	.....	
1567	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	James VI.
1572	.....	.....	.....	Gregory XIII.	.....	.....	
1574	.....	Henry III.	.....	.....	.....	.....	
1576	.....	.....	Rodolph II.	.....	.....	.....	
1584	.....	.....	.....	.....	Fedor I.	.....	



A. D.	ENGLAND	FRANCE	GERMANY	PAPAL STATES	RUSSIA	SPAIN	SCOTLAND
1585	.....	.....	.....	Sixtus V.			
1589	.....	Henry IV.	.....	Urban VII.			
1590	.....	.....	.....	Gregory XIV.			
—	.....	.....	.....	Innocent IX.			
1591	.....	.....	.....	Clement VIII.			
1592	.....	.....	.....	.....	Boris Godonouf	Philip III.	
1593	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	
1603	G. BRITAIN	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	Ascended
1605	James I.	.....	.....	Leo XI.	Pseudo-		the throne
—	.....	.....	.....	Paul V.	Dmitri		of England
1606	.....	.....	.....	.....	Vassili V.		March,
1610	.....	Louis XIII.	.....	.....	.....		1603.
1612	.....	.....	Matthias	.....	Mikhail		
1613	.....	.....	.....	.....	Romanof		
1619	.....	.....	Ferd. II.	.....	.....	Philip IV.	
1621	.....	.....	.....	Gregory XV.	.....		
1623	.....	.....	.....	Urban VIII.	.....		
1625	Charles I.	.....	Ferd. III.	.....	.....		
1637	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....		
1643	.....	Louis XIV.	.....	Innocent X.	Alexis		
1644	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....		
1645	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....		
1649	Commonw.	.....	.....	.....	.....		
1653	O. Cromwell	.....	.....	.....	.....		
	Protector	.....	.....	.....	.....		
1655	.....	.....	.....	Alexander VII.	.....		
1658	R. Cromwell	.....	Leopold I.	.....	.....	Charles II.	
	Protector	.....	.....	.....	.....		
1660	Charles II.	.....	.....	.....	.....		
1665	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....		
1667	.....	.....	.....	Clement IX.	.....		
1670	.....	.....	.....	Clement X.	.....		
1676	.....	.....	.....	Innocent XI.	Fedor II.		
1682	.....	.....	.....	.....	Ivan V. &		
1685	James II.	.....	.....	.....	Peter the G.		
1689	Mary &	.....	.....	Alexander VIII.	Peter the G.		
	William III.	.....	.....	.....	.....		
1691	.....	.....	.....	Innocent XII.	.....		
1695	William III.	.....	.....	.....	.....		
1700	.....	.....	.....	Clement XI.	.....	Philip V.	
1702	Anne	.....	.....	.....	.....		
1705	.....	.....	Joseph I.	.....	.....		
1711	.....	.....	Charles VI.	.....	.....		
1714	George I.	.....	.....	.....	.....		
1715	.....	Louis XV.	.....	Innocent XIII.	.....		
1721	.....	.....	.....	Benedict XIII.	.....	Louis	
1724	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	Philip V.	
—	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	(restored)	
1725	.....	.....	.....	.....	Catharine I.		
1727	George I.	.....	.....	.....	Peter II.		
1730	.....	.....	.....	Clement XII.	Anne		
1740	.....	.....	.....	Benedict XIV.	Ivan VI.		
1741	.....	.....	.....	.....	Elizabeth		
1742	.....	.....	Charles VII.	.....	.....		
1745	.....	.....	Francis I. & Maria Teresa	.....	.....		
1746	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	Ferd. VI.	
1758	.....	.....	.....	Clement XIII.	.....		
1759	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	Charles III.	
1760	George III.	.....	.....	.....	.....		
1762	.....	.....	.....	.....	Peter III.		
—	.....	.....	.....	.....	Catharine II.		
1765	.....	.....	Joseph II.	.....	.....		
1769	.....	.....	.....	Clement XIV.	.....		
1774	.....	Louis XVI.	.....	.....	.....		
1775	.....	.....	.....	Pius VI.	.....		
1788	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	Charles IV.	
1790	.....	.....	Leopold II.	.....	.....		
1792	.....	Republic	Francis II.*	.....	.....		
1796	.....	.....	.....	.....	Paul		

Vide GREAT BRITAIN

\* Upon the establishment of the Confederation of the Rhine, in 1806, Francis ceased to be Emperor of Germany, and became hereditary Emperor of Austria, under the title of Francis I.

## THE LESSER EUROPEAN STATES.

A. D.	DENMARK	NAPLES	POLAND	PORTUGAL	PRUSSIA	SARDINIA	SWEDEN
1500	John	.....	John Albert	Manuel			
1501	.....	.....	Alexander				
1506	.....	.....	Sigismond I.				
1513	Christian II.	.....	.....	John III.			
1521	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	Gustavus Wasa
1523	Frederic I.	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	
1534	Christian III.	.....	Sigismond II.	.....	.....	.....	
1548	.....	.....	.....	Sebastian	.....	.....	
1557	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	
1559	Frederic II.	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	Eric XIV.
1560	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	John III.
1568	.....	.....	Henry (III. France)	.....	.....	.....	
1574	.....	.....	Stephen	.....	.....	.....	
1575	.....	.....	.....	Henry Antonio	.....	.....	
1578	.....	.....	.....	Philip I.	.....	.....	
1580	.....	.....	.....	(II. Spain)	.....	.....	
1587	.....	.....	Sigismond	.....	.....	.....	
1588	Christian IV.	.....	[III.]	.....	.....	.....	Sigismond (III. Poland)
1592	.....	.....	.....	Philip II. (III. Spain)	.....	.....	
1598	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	
1604	.....	.....	.....	Philip III. (IV. Spain)	.....	.....	Charles IX. Gustavus Adolphus
1611	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	
1621	.....	.....	Uladislas VII.	John IV.	.....	.....	Christina
1632	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	
1633	.....	.....	Casimir V.	.....	.....	.....	
1640	.....	.....	.....	Alfonso VI.	.....	.....	Charles X.
1648	Frederic III.	.....	.....	Peter, Reg't.	.....	.....	Charles XI.
1654	.....	.....	Michael	.....	.....	.....	
1656	.....	.....	John Sobieski	.....	.....	.....	
1660	.....	.....	Fred. Aug. I.	Peter II.	.....	.....	Charles XII.
1667	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	
1669	.....	.....	Stanislas I.	John V.	.....	.....	
1670	Christian V.	.....	Fred. Aug. I. (restored)	.....	.....	.....	
1674	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	
1674	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	
1683	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	
1697	Frederic IV.	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	
1699	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	
1701	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	
1704	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	
1706	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	
1709	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	
1713	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	
1719	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	
1720	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	Ulrica & Frederic
1730	Christian VI.	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	
1733	.....	.....	Fred. Aug. II.	.....	.....	.....	
1735	.....	Charles (III. Spain)	.....	.....	.....	.....	
1740	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	
1741	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	
1746	Frederic V.	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	Frederic
1750	.....	.....	.....	Joseph	.....	.....	
1751	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	Adolphus Frederic
1759	.....	Ferdinand I.	.....	.....	.....	.....	
1764	.....	.....	Stanislas II.	.....	.....	.....	
1766	Christian VII.	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	
1771	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	Gustavus [III.]
1772	.....	.....	1st Partition	.....	.....	.....	
1773	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	
1777	.....	.....	.....	Maria & Peter III.	.....	.....	
1786	.....	.....	.....	Maria	.....	.....	
1792	.....	.....	.....	John, Reg't.	.....	.....	Gustavus [IV.]
1793	.....	.....	2d Partition	.....	.....	.....	
1795	.....	.....	3d Partition	.....	.....	.....	
1796	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	
1797	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	



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